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ABSTRACT

This report presents information on the University of Massachusetts Boston's Diversity Research Initiative (DRI). Section 1, "Essays by Participant Observers," includes "Building a Diversity Research Initiative: An Introduction" (Esther Kingston-Mann); "Diversity Imperative: Reflections on the Diversity Research Initiative" (Lin Zhan); "Research and Research Methods in the Diversity Research Initiative" (Tim Sieber); "Diversity Research on University Image: Research Process and Empirical Findings" (Raymond R. Liu); "Collaborative Process and/or Publishable Product: A Research Dilemma in the Diversity Research Initiative. One Faculty Member's Reflection" (Clark Taylor); and "After the Initiative: Envisioning Diversity Research Sustainability" (Peter Nien-chu Kiang). Section 2 includes "Lessons of the DRI: Unforeseen Challenges, Benefits, and Goals Achieved" and "A List of Diversity Research Initiative Projects: Spring 1997-Fall 1998." Section 3, "Sample Reports from DRI's Collaborative Research Teams," includes: "UMB Faculty's Knowledge and Perceptions around Students with Disabilities"; "Development of a Multicultural Undergraduate Nursing Curriculum Checklist"; "Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Students: Experiences with the University of Massachusetts Boston"; "Diversity Research Initiative: Students' Learning Experiences and Educational Environments at CPCS"; and "Analyzing the Impact of Asian American Studies in the Curriculum: Making Meaning Over Time in the Lives of Alumni." Section 4 presents "Sample Materials Developed by DRI Teams." (Some papers contain references.) (SM)

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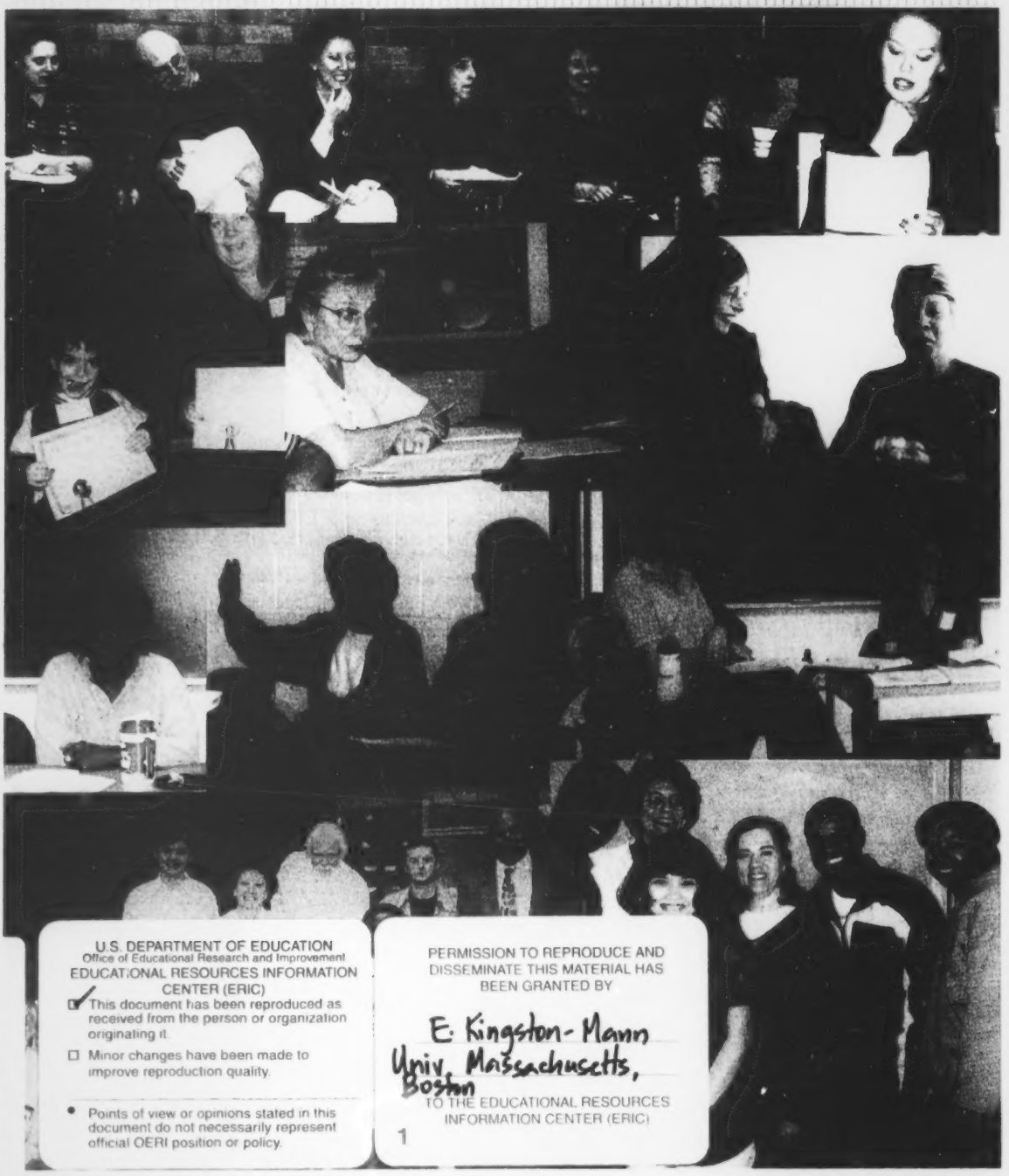
A Diversity Research Initiative: How Diverse Undergraduate Students Become Researchers, Change Agents, and Members of a Research Community

University of Massachusetts Boston

Center for the Improvement of Teaching



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A Diversity Research Initiative: How Diverse Undergraduate Students Become Researchers, Change Agents, and Members of a Research Community

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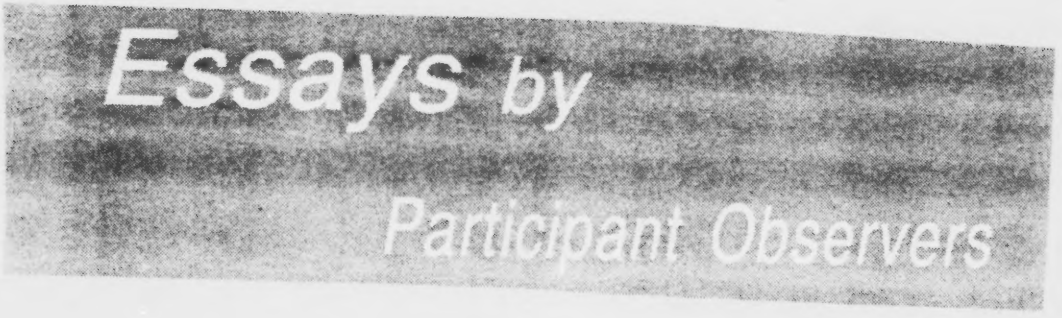
Essays by Participant Observers



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Building a Diversity Research Initiative: An Introduction

by Esther Kingston-Mann
Project Director, American Studies/History/
Director of the Center for the Improvement of Teaching

What we came out of it with was the feeling that we can do research. We are researchers.

Tiffany Gouch, student, Fall 1997 DRI cohort.

Background

In 1997, a diverse cohort of faculty and students from three of UMB's five colleges set themselves to create a university-wide, student/faculty research community that would make use of the university as the site of inquiry into issues of diversity. Supported by a Ford Foundation grant, our aim was to collaboratively educate and empower undergraduates as investigators of campus diversity, whose data and recommendations educated the university and moved it closer to the goal of inclusion which lies at the heart of UMB's urban mission. Beyond the campus, we hoped to add the voices of our researchers and their subjects to a broader national discourse on diversity in higher education that— until now— has rarely included the perspectives of urban commuter institutions. As far as we know, there are no initiatives currently underway in the US that are as ambitious in their pedagogical and research objectives, i.e., in which diverse, student/faculty team collaborations within an interdisciplinary community generate significant data on diversity.[1]

The success of the Diversity Research Initiative was by no means a foregone conclusion (and there were in fact projects that experienced severe difficulty in meeting the challenges that the initiative posed). The DRI experiment was rooted in an impressive history of UMB diversity initiatives which revealed new potentials for transformation in the traditional, hierarchical roles and responsibilities of students and faculty. It was inspired as well by a shared belief that the education of our students would be profoundly benefited by the opportunity 1) to acquire research skills through involvement in a significant research project that linked them with students and faculty from other colleges and disciplines, and 2) to explore together what DRI faculty leader Lin Zhan has described as the "hidden

curriculum" of the DRI, i.e., the larger forces, values and assumptions about diversity which shape both researchers and their subjects. The collection of essays that follow document some of the key challenges and achievements that comprised the DRI experience. Our hope is that UMB's DRI will provide lessons and examples for colleagues on our campus and elsewhere .

Contexts for Change: Diversity and Traditions of Transformation

UMass Boston was created as an institution whose urban mission was to provide low cost, high quality education to a primarily urban and low-income population of varied backgrounds. As a non-residential, commuter campus within the University of Massachusetts system, our 448 full-time faculty members and 12,499 full-time students are today more diverse in their backgrounds than at any other institution of higher learning in New England. Sixty percent of the student body are the first in their families to attend college, 53% of our undergraduates are women, over 400 are students with disabilities, and the percentage of undergraduate students of color stands at 30%. Among the full-time faculty, 38% are women and 18.5% are people of color. However, while the relative diversity of the faculty and student body provided a favorable starting point for developing a curriculum and pedagogy of inclusion, it did not ensure that they possessed any understanding of each other's backgrounds, or that they would support wide-ranging initiatives for change

In the 1990s, a decade-long struggle for university-wide curriculum and teaching transformation laid some of the foundations for the Diversity Research Initiative. Co-ordinated by UMB's Center for the Improvement of Teaching (CIT),[2] a grass-roots, student/faculty/staff Diversity Working Group sought approval for a university-wide diversity requirement,[3] and a grant project funded by the Ford Foundation established semester-long, interdisciplinary faculty development seminars that focused on diversity as a pedagogical and a content issue.[4] Eventually, both of these initiatives were successfully institutionalized. In 1991, UMB began to mandate the study of diversity as a graduation requirement, and in 1996, faculty development seminars became a standard feature of the operating budget of the Office of the Provost (and were supported as well by funding from the deans of the university's five colleges).[5] UMB may well be the only university in the country to provide a whole semester's courseload reduction for faculty who wish to collaborate with colleagues on the improvement of their teaching. One of the many unforeseen outcomes of these efforts was the emergence of a diverse and sophisticated faculty constituency for change, and a network of discipline-trained teachers who were committed to interdisciplinary and student-centered learning. It was from this group that the first faculty team leaders in the DRI were drawn.

Focus on Students

While faculty participation in campus diversity initiatives has become part of a UMB tradition of grass-roots educational innovation, student achievements as change agents on our campus by and large have not. Unfortunately, the transience, discontinuities and fragmentation which are everyday features of life at an urban commuter university have functioned to ensure that little institutional knowledge is routinely passed on from one student generation to the next. Typically, UMB students commute to campus and leave their classes to work full time and to fulfill family responsibilities. They possess precious little time to become knowledgeable about available campus opportunities and existing networks of support (much less to participate in activities which interest them). Forced trade-offs between coursework, jobs and family care frequently undermine their academic efforts. To carve out the time to engage in even the most traditional of student activities –to see a tutor, to take advantage of campus computer facilities, or even to ask for help from a faculty adviser—can often pose an insurmountable challenge. [6]

In this setting, few current students –even those who are interested in campus change –are aware that their predecessors played a key role in the Diversity Working Group that won acceptance for UMB's university-wide diversity requirement, published a multicultural newspaper called ***Prisma***, or established a Center for Student Rights. Traditions which transmit student knowledge and pride in past successes are in short supply at commuter institutions. Their absence reinforces the sense of "disidentification" with academic life that –as social psychologist Claude Steele points out—undermines the academic efforts of students from historically marginalized groups in US society.[7] These students —frequently undervalued, underestimated, and unchallenged in their pre-college years— are reluctant to identify with academic values that categorized them as people without significant potential for growth and development. In the words of one first-year student at UMB,

> ***High school was like a penance imposed for some unknown sin. Everything I ever learned that was important to me was learned outside of school. So I never thought to associate "schools" with "learning."***

The DRI was conceived as a response to the difficult environment for learning that prevails at UMB, and at most urban commuter institutions across the country. Building on the insights generated by successful initiatives elsewhere which foster the acquisition of important academic skills in a challenging and supportive setting,[8] we set ourselves to reinforce our students' often heroic efforts to succeed in college –

not by "lowering standards," but by engaging them in challenging and significant research. Our plan was to invite students of diverse backgrounds who ordinarily spend little time on campus to participate in an intellectually demanding project that offered them academic credit for engaging in diversity research that deepened their understandings of their own academic environment.

We began with the assumption that all of our students possess the potential to be researchers –i.e., that they are all capable of learning how to obtain significant information from documents, media sources, statistical records, and from other people. The successes and breakthroughs achieved by student/faculty research teams were viewed as a credit to their ability and hard work; setbacks were interpreted not as a sign that students lacked ability, but simply as a reflection of the magnitude and significance of the research challenges they faced.

Structure and Participation in the DRI

Over a two year period, thirteen student/faculty teams carried out diversity research projects. Each semester, the DRI cohort included at least three teams of 4-7 students (each with a faculty coordinator), in addition to the project director and assistant director. Teams met at least once a week (more frequently, as deadlines approached) to design their research projects, develop plans for implementing it together, and contribute to the writing of a final research report. Faculty team leaders met on a bi-weekly basis to discuss emerging issues and questions, and to set the agenda for the next cohort-wide seminar. The seminars met six times during the course of the semester to share insights, problems of data and analysis, and in order to explore common and differing understandings of diversity.

In general, DRI faculty were selected on the basis of their commitment to diversity research, diversity of backgrounds and college affiliations, and the significance of the research topic they proposed.[9] Applicants whose proposals reflected a superficial understanding or commitment to diversity were usually rejected, but none were disqualified due to a lack of experience in research projects similar to the DRI. On occasion, faculty less experienced as researchers encountered difficulties in their work as team leaders, but made invaluable contributions to the work of colleagues through seminar-wide deliberations over diversity research and understandings of diversity. Over 50% of the DRI faculty were people of color. The high priority placed on diversity in faculty recruitment was consistent with the goals of inclusion and community building which inspired the DRI.

Students admitted to the DRI were usually recruited by faculty team leaders; in general, they were juniors and seniors with an interest in diversity but without prior research skills or experience. In the project as a whole, 56% of the student participants were people of color. For the most part, they had seldom worked with people from racial backgrounds that differed from their own, and few were

accustomed to collaborative work with students or with faculty. The early stages of team formation –learning to listen carefully to each other, and developing a sense of mutual responsibility—were often a challenge. According to student Paula Knowles of the Spring 1998 cohort,

> ***I think some of the problems we encountered in the beginning were that we were five strong-willed people ... And we had to come to a realization that –except for Elton who always listens— that not just listening, but really trying to understand what the other person was getting at, was going to be one of the most important aspects of getting this project going.***[10]

As one student ruefully observed, efforts to build a friendly and collaborative spirit within the research team were sometimes at odds with the pressure to complete research by the end of the semester deadline. Hyun Jung Lee, a student in the spring 1997 cohort recalled an incident in which she was late for an appointment with an interview subject. Later, at a team meeting, "We opened our minds and talked about our problems, and about what we expected from each other." It was then, she said,

> ***I really felt that I was doing group work, and realized that this research was not a funny matter ... And I'm telling you it wasn't an enjoyable moment at all. But after we opened our minds, I felt much closer to each member of my team and to this project.***

On occasion, the tension between building a collaborative research team, analyzing research data, and meeting end of the semester deadlines posed the team with difficult choices. In the case described in Clark Taylor's essay, student and faculty team members weighed the prospect of losing valuable research time against the importance of taking the time to heal the breach within their multiracial team. Learning the practice of multicultural collaboration on occasion conflicted with the professional commitment to "get on with the job" of getting the research done.

However, in the course of each semester, as DRI research teams set to work, and began to share their findings and dilemmas with the larger group, there was usually a point when students began to understand that research was not a mysterious process that was accessible only to the possessors of Ph.Ds. In the words of a student Yen Phi Mach of the spring 1997 cohort:

> ***I remember at different times during this research project, I wondered 'Why are we taking so many little steps in this gathering of data? It's such a waste of time!' I thought that we could just do the interview and pick out lines or quotes that are***

important to answering the questions we were asking. But now that we are at the end of the semester, I realize that all those steps were important because we are not the only people working with the data, and that people from other semesters might be looking at the data also. I feel now that I was somewhat selfish before; I didn't think about who else might benefit from the hard work we have done to find out all this information. Now that I realize this, I feel that all the different steps we took to get to this point have not been wasted, and that it was very important to everyone.

As students gathered data on aspects of the university that had not previously been studied, some began to see themselves in a new light –not only as receivers of the wisdom of their teachers, but as campus-level "experts" on certain important features of university life. By semester's end, a significant proportion of DRI students had begun to take their places as researchers —not in the same location, but on the same continuum occupied by the faculty who ordinarily teach and advise them.

As Tim Sieber's essay suggests, a particular DRI challenge was to foster the acquisition of research skills through investigation of an institutional environment by "insiders" who belonged to the same community as those they were researching.[11] Frequently, the cohort-wide DRI seminar explored the dilemmas – and took account of the courage and tact required for the task they had undertaken. Students raised questions about the possible repercussions for students interviewed if interview data was widely disseminated. They wanted to know if tenured faculty might be tempted to set limits to the scope of their research out of a reluctance to rock a boat that they had helped to build. Others were concerned about the possible danger to students and to untenured faculty researchers if their findings too deeply challenged existing practices and procedures. How were these difficulties to be resolved? In the words of one student, "Are we cowards if we recognize such fears?"

In his own and in subsequent cohort seminars, faculty member Peter Kiang was invited to discuss these issues with DRI participants. Making use of an organizational chart that clearly set out the structure of decision- and policy-making at UMB, he moderated a discussion of how team projects might increase the potential impact of their research by identifying the decision-makers and stakeholders whose interests were relevant to a team's particular research focus. In response to student anger over instances of discrimination that they had discovered, Kiang drew attention to the complexities of "insider criticism." The challenge of working for change and building community were not any easier to resolve at UMB than they are in other contexts.

As students and faculty weighed the competing imperatives of bringing difficult issues to light against the need to ensure the safety of the researcher and the interviewee in a setting where power and status were not equally distributed, they raised questions which lie at the heart of any serious approach to field research. Students and faculty became aware of the gaps in their institutional knowledge and the obstacles to easy resolution of these issues. In general, the advice given was to move ahead, to document carefully, maintain the strictest possible rules for anonymity, and to emphasize that the research findings were intended not as an exposé but as a means of fostering positive change. It is difficult to exaggerate the benefits of considering such questions openly—not in isolation—but with the support of a diverse, student/faculty/staff community.

Although the ambitious goals of the DRI were in one sense intimidating, they were also inspiring. Neither students nor faculty needed convincing that it was of crucial importance to research and better understand, for example, the impact of Black Studies courses on white students, the experience of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered students in UMB classrooms, and the degree and quality of faculty understandings of students with disabilities. Faced with the stresses and strains that are ordinary features of any serious research effort, students and faculty were frequently sustained by their belief in how much this research *mattered*. They were aware that they were being changed by what they were learning from their own and other teams, and by the new relationships that were developing within and across research teams. New conceptions of their relationship to the university were particularly striking. According to a student in the fall 1998 cohort,

> ***The DRI was the best thing that I got out of UMB, especially being a senior and not feeling connected to the school. The project made me feel different. I felt a connection from working closely with the professors, playing a part in change and making the school better. That's very satisfying to me.***

In the fall 1998 cohort, student Hanh Tran commented:

By taking the DRI, I feel like I belong to the school more, because I understand more the program that I'm in, and also how other programs work and run. I feel proud of myself and lucky to be in this class. I now have not only have friends in the Nursing Program, but also friends in other majors like in music, and also students with disabilities, and so on.

Asked how participation in the DRI affected attitudes toward UMB, student Ingrid Rush observed:

I see now that there are people who are willing to change UMB. Before, I would think, "This is how it is." I now got a sense of empowerment and something is happening ... Change doesn't happen overnight and it might take years for things to change. We just need to deal with it, help each other grow, and help each other to make it through.

In contrast to the problems of "disidentification" with academic values that were set out by Claude Steele, a student whose team was researching the teaching of Cultural Awareness in the College of Public and Community Service complained instead of

> ***an incredible frustration with the fact that when we finished this we couldn't then say 'And this is what we would like you to do from here.' and give it to someone and say 'now you do it next semester' and pass it on for two years, and everybody keeps doing more of it.***

Understandings of Diversity

One unexpected benefit was that we, the African American interviewers learned about our own assumptions about White people in the process. This is something I had not expected, but one of the most valuable things that I've gotten out of the DRI experience. When you look outside for knowledge, you have to remember to look inside as well.

Lauren Craig Redmond, student, Spring 1998 cohort

Throughout the DRI, students and faculty were repeatedly challenged by the differing understandings of diversity within research teams and between teams in each DRI cohort. While the structure of the DRI did not guarantee resolution or reconciliation, a number of students and faculty commented on the way that the larger seminars helped to provide some perspective on the challenges they were facing. According to a faculty member in the fall 1997 cohort,

> ***You may have something going on in your group and you think, maybe that's not coming out so well. And you go to the meeting and see that others are dealing with the same things. So you think, 'Let's find more solutions between all of us ... that approach worked very well.'***

At one DRI faculty meeting, a faculty research team leader reported that a Haitian and an Italian American student (both female) with strong religious commitments were skeptical about the inclusion of gay issues in a diversity project. How to deal responsibly with this issue? We (the faculty and project director) agreed that 1) the "skeptics" were not ideologues, but inexperienced young people in the process of formulating their views and opinions, and 2) that our seminar discussions needed to ensure that participating gay students emerged with a measure of confidence that their presence and their contributions were valued.

From a research perspective, it seemed particularly important that students understand that diversity research was not simply a matter of questioning and analyzing "the Other," i.e., their interview subjects. As director, I suggested that student researchers needed to understand that both they and their subject were part of a larger culture whose messages they interpreted and re-interpreted over time. To engage responsibly in diversity research meant to acknowledge, understand and clarify one's own values and assumptions about diversity, and to seriously reflect upon the meaning of inclusion. We eventually decided to raise the issue of gays and diversity at our next cohort-wide seminar, and to take responsibility for ensuring that the discussion remained open and respectful. The faculty leader of the DRI research team investigating the experience of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered students on campus agreed to consult with her group about how best to frame the discussion.

At the opening of the next DRI seminar meeting, the faculty (who foresaw a difficult discussion) exchanged reassuring glances. I (the project director) began by commenting on the need for empathy and mutual respect in exploring our understandings of diversity and in investigating the views of others. A student member of the GLBT research team —her eyes riveted on me in hopes that I would somehow ensure her safety— then proceeded to describe in detail a horrific personal experience of efforts to "deprogram" her by a conservative Christian group to which she belonged. An African American member of the GLBT research group commented, "This is reality; this is what happens..."

To all who were present, the issue of whether gay issues belonged in the DRI had become immediate and inescapable. In the dismayed silence which followed, members of the seminar were brought face to face with the impact of anti-gay hostility upon someone they knew. One of the student "skeptics" left the room, and the other was in tears. She crossed the room to where the gay student was sitting and put her hand on her arm. "Real Christians aren't like that, please don't think that." After a moment, the room erupted in applause. The discussion then continued, with gay students speaking more openly and confidently than ever before in the seminar ...

That night, many email messages to the Director, ranging from "Thank you for tonight's discussion" to "Wow!!!!" and "I can't believe we survived that discussion!" to "I was so proud of us tonight." No final resolution was reached, but the experience we had shared encouraged us to hope that future exchanges would be equally honest and respectful.

The diverse backgrounds of DRI participants were a source of insights that deepened and— in positive ways— complicated our research efforts. In many instances, the data and experiences shared suggested that the conventional dichotomies between thought and feeling, or between "scientific rationality" and humane values could function to constrain our understanding of the questions being raised. In one group, student researchers reported to the cohort-wide seminar on a faculty statement that students with foreign accents could not be successful as professionals, and on the students who reacted by withdrawing from the professional programs in which they were enrolled. In another, a faculty member reflected on her team's rage, disgust and sadness at the discovery of racist attitudes held by faculty about students of Hispanic background. Trained herself to accept notions of objectivity which set the data at a distance, faculty member Reyes Fidalgo observed, "We had to stop for a while and say, 'well, let's see what this project is doing to us. What are our reactions? Are they going to alter the way we do this research?" Recognizing that the students' feelings of sympathy led them to ask deeper questions, and encouraged their interview subjects to share information they might not have reported to a more detached observer, she commented, "Students made me aware of these things as research issues."

Members of Reyes Fidalgo's DRI research team.

Lin Zhan's essay recounts the experience of her students, who shared with their seminar colleagues not only their data, but also their grief and dismay over the pain that prejudiced remarks inflicted on their fellow students. When an Asian American team member reported on efforts to analyze and understand data containing the stereotypical judgement that students of Asian background could not succeed professionally because they were insufficiently assertive, an African American member of another team was moved to suggest a very different perspective. As he saw it, to persist in a hostile environment was in fact a sign of assertiveness and courage by Asians, or, for that matter, by members of any other social group. As Lin Zhan observes, his reframing of the definition of assertiveness decisively changed and deepened her team's analysis of their data.

In the final research presentations during that semester, when an Asian American student broke into tears in the midst of a difficult narrative, expressions of encouragement and support came from every corner of the room. Deeply moved by her feelings of compassion, an African American member of another team slowly and rhythmically called out, "It's all right...Just let it out ... It's okay to feel it." To student Jian Rong Liu, "the content of diversity became much richer and real because we exposed ourselves to people's real experience of diversity by doing this research." These were complex and painful moments of intense communication that blurred the boundaries between the researcher and her research subject, and expanded the hopes for mutual support and community for all who shared it.

Moving away from a conception of objectivity that values detachment and indifference as routes to understanding, students and faculty from other teams in the cohort did *not* suggest that their fellow researchers set aside their feelings. Viewing empathy as a source of deeper understanding, they expressed indignation at the injustices revealed and warm support for their student colleagues. At the same time, they offered a number of practical suggestions about possible next steps to consider.

Teacher Transformation

A willingness to learn as well as to lead was crucial to the success of student/faculty research teams within the DRI. Although the initiative was intended above all to be a significant learning opportunity for undergraduate students, it turned out to pose important challenges for faculty as well. Although most faculty participants were experienced scholars, attracted to the DRI by the opportunity to work collaboratively with students and colleagues, they were also socialized –as are most university faculty—to be "all-purpose" authorities in the classroom. In the DRI, they were invited to assume the role not only of coach and collaborator, but of *learner*. Some accepted this role more gracefully and easily than others. As a faculty member who doesn't usually teach research methods, but was

experienced as a qualitative researcher and as a teacher in multicultural settings, Clark Taylor observed,

> ***At question here is whether it is important for programs like the DRI to take risks with people like me to do research on diversity within our own institutions. Based on my experience and the positive growth of the students I worked with, I argue that it is –both on "people like me" and on "diversity" grounds.***

Raymond Liu's essay describes the challenge of 'playing the professor's role' by providing guidance, frameworks for analysis, and an understanding of particular research techniques, while at the same tim, taking on the role of student (as a team member/team leader). As Liu demonstrates, the contrast between student/faculty collaborative research and traditional research methods courses significantly deepened his own understanding of the research process.

To UMB faculty who carry the heavy teaching load and extraordinary service commitments which are typical of urban commuter institutions, the DRI provided what was in many respects a helpful model for teaching, learning, and community building. At DRI faculty meetings, teachers accustomed to solving pedagogical challenges on their own could share "war stories" about research glitches, shortcuts and useful readings. Generous collaboration between faculty within cohorts and across cohorts was a common feature of the DRI. Faculty members from earlier cohorts frequently attended presentations by those who succeeded them, and provided moral support as well as useful advice about interviewing techniques, coding of evidence, research readings, and analytical strategies. In these contexts, faculty became more faithful colleagues and members of a community with common goals.

The Broader DRI Challenge

During the past decade, US higher education has experienced a dramatic demographic transformation (with students more diverse than ever before in US history), an accelerated growth and development in multicultural, interdisciplinary research, and an often rancorous national debate over "political correctness." The 1990s was also an era which saw the implementation of many national, regional and local projects for multicultural curriculum and teaching transformation. It is particularly noteworthy that institutions located in urban settings —commuter institutions, state colleges, and community colleges— have produced the overwhelming majority of diversity initiatives and reports on diversity projects for the Ford Foundation, the ACE (American Council on Education), AACU (Association of American Colleges and Universities) and NCORE (National

Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education). In a three-year, Ford-funded Communications Initiative, institutions like Memphis State, Bloomfield College, North Seattle Community College, and UMass Boston played leading roles in telling the story of how higher education is changing to meet the challenges of diversity. These institutions are attended by the most diverse students in the nation. They impose heavy teaching obligations on their faculty, whose daily teaching encounters with diverse students place them on the frontlines of ongoing contemporary transformations in higher education.

However, the national discourse on diversity in higher education, and debates over questions of curriculum and teaching transformation has in general been dominated by research institutions whose commitment to multicultural teaching and curriculum transformation is comparatively recent, and quite fragile in comparison with their traditions of support for discipline-based scholarly research. In the media and in much of the scholarly literature, the valuable initiatives for teaching and curriculum transformation undertaken by Harvard, Stanford and Berkeley are highlighted; the valuable work of community colleges and urban commuter institutions by and large are not. Over a five month period in 1999 in the ***New York Times***' weekly Focus on Education, only one article out of nineteen dealing with higher education made reference to an urban commuter college or university. Although the majority of students in higher education attend urban commuter institutions, Jossey-Bass —one of the leading education publishers in the United States declared in June 1998 that it was their policy *not* to consider for publication any manuscripts that focused primarily on urban commuter institutions.[12] According to Jossey Bass, the study of teaching, learning and curriculum change at urban commuter institutions is too narrow a topic for readers concerned with changing US higher education. Such institutions are evidently viewed at best as the receivers rather than the producers of insights and knowledge about diversity issues.

In this context, it is significant that the DRI emerged at a diverse, urban commuter institution with an imperfect but long-standing commitment to inclusive teaching, learning and curriculum change. Between 1997 and 1999, its teams and seminars linked the teaching of research methods with the creation of a collaborative, student-faculty research community whose work empowered students as researchers. An ambitious project indeed. The DRI included — as the following essays reveal — all of the glitches, disappointments and on occasion, the failures, which constitute ordinary features of the change process. It also promoted a transformation in skills, perspectives, career choices, and a renewed faith in the significance of collaborative work by students and faculty. According to student Michelle Pirog of the fall 1998 cohort, "The DRI was my most fun and hard working experience at UMB. It has shed a wonderful perspective on how I would like to proceed in my education and my career." The DRI experience of Candice Taggart, a member of the spring 1998 research team from the College of Nursing (now graduated), convinced her to become a transcultural nurse.

As a professional nurse, it is my responsibility to meet the needs of patients from diverse backgrounds. I intend to meet my goal by taking the first step, which is to learn a second language. I am going to study Spanish, since the Hispanic population is the fastest growing population in this nation.

As the following essays demonstrate, the DRI experiment placed unusual levels of stress, and extraordinary — and perhaps unfair — time pressures on student and faculty participants. In the absence of models for our work, flexibility and inventiveness on the part of students and faculty became key features of successful projects; openness to learning as we moved on to uncharted terrain was another. In this process, each of us — and not least the project director — were supported and sustained by the generosity of mind and spirit exhibited by members of the DRI community. ■

Members of Fall 1997 DRI Cohort

Notes

[1] There are, however, many campus-based projects for research on diversity issues. See discussion below, Chapter 6.

[2] With funding from the Ford Foundation, CIT was established in 1983 as one of the first university-level centers in the United States whose aim was to provide faculty with opportunities to work collaboratively on the wide range of pedagogical questions that were not ordinarily part of their discipline-based graduate training.

[3] See Kingston-Mann, "Multiculturalism without Political Correctness: The UMass Boston Model," *Boston Review*, May-June 1991.

[4] In 1991, diversity became a central focus of most CIT seminars. By 1999, 172 faculty members from across the campus (1/4 of the faculty) were seminar alumni, and many emerged as key change agents on campus. See Chris Reardon, "An Urban

Commuter College Responds to Diversity," *Ford Foundation Report*, (Winter, 1992): 10-15, Roger Deitz, "Education's Challenge of the Nineties," *Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*, vol. 2, no. 9 (May, 1992): 4-7, Suzanne Benally, "External Reviewer's Report to the Ford Foundation on the CIT Faculty Seminars," March 11, 1997, Robert Diamond, "Case Study: University of Massachusetts at Boston," *Designing and Assessing Courses and Curricula: A Practical Guide* (San Francisco, 1998), pp. 209-214, and see also CIT website: http://omega.cc.umb.edu/~cit/home.html

[5] The added value that diversity contributes to a student's education at UMB may not be as widely recognized as they should be. The findings of Raymond Liu's DRI team suggest that faculty should be aware that in their classrooms they are not only teaching a course, but also contributing to the image of the university held by their students -- of UMB as an inclusive or non-inclusiveeducational insitution. See Chapter 4, pp. 56-79.

[6] See discussion in Esther Kingston-Mann, "Three Steps Forward, One Step Back: Dilemmas of Upward Mobility," in Kingston-Mann and Tim Sieber, eds., *Achieving Against the Odds: Teaching and Learning in the New Millennium*, Temple University Press, forthcoming, 2000.

[7] Claude Steele, "Race and the Schooling of African Americans," *Atlantic Monthly*, 1992, pp.68-78.

[8]Jerome Dancis, "Alternative Learning Environment Helps Minority Students Excel in Calculus at U.C. Berkeley: A Pedagogical Analysis," 1-6; Comer, James P., *Rallying the Whole Village: the Comer Process for Reforming Education* (New York, 1996); Meier, Deborah, *The Power of their Ideas: Lessons for America From a Small School in Harlem*, (Boston, 1995).

[9] According to the selection process set up after the completion of the first semester of the DRI, faculty from each cohort served on the selection committee for applicants to the next.

[10] See also Beth Clemens' observations on the building of a collaborative research team in Section III.

[11]Although in general, investigators involved in action research projects are not members of the community being researched, the literature of "action research" offers some useful insights. See, for example, Chris Argryis, Robert Putnam and Diana McLain Smith, *Action Science: Concepts, Methods and Skills for Research*, San Francisco, 1985, Francesca Canian, "Conflicts Between Activist Research and Academic Success: Participatory Research and Alternative Strategies," *American Sociologist*, Spring 1993, 24 (1): 92-106, Concha Delgado-Gaitan, "Researcher Change and Changing the Researcher," *Harvard Ed Review* 1993, 63(4):389-411, Davydd Greenwood and Morten Levin, *Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change*, Sage, 1998, Muhammad Anisur Rahman, *People's Self-Development: Perspectives on Participatory Action Research*, London, 1993.

[12] This Jossey-Bass statement appeared in a response to submission of a manuscript co-edited by Esther Kingston-Mann and Tim Sieber and entitled *Achieving Against the Odds: Teaching and Learning in the New Millennium* (now under contract with Temple University Press).

Diversity Imperative: Reflections on the Diversity Research Initiative[1]

by Lin Zhan

College of Nursing

Background

Our Diversity Research Initiative (DRI) team[2], using the University of Massachusetts Boston as a site of inquiry, investigated the learning needs and experiences of Asian American students in the College of Nursing (CN). The impetus to understand the learning needs of Asian American students came from challenges that nursing education faces today. Nursing education in general is charged to prepare graduates who are not only professionally competent but also ethnically representative. But at present, of 2.6 million nurses nationwide, only 10% come from ethnically diverse backgrounds; in the New England area, ethnically diverse representation of nurses is only 3%. To meet the needs of the rapidly increasingly diverse populations in the nation, and in the New England region, healthcare organizations call for increasing racial diversity in the nursing workforce and for practitioners capable of offering culturally competent care. In the CN there are significant numbers of ethnic students, especially Asian Americans. However, Asian American students' retention rates are not high, and sometimes tensions emerge as faculty attempt to assimilate nursing students into the profession while students struggle simply to stay and to go on. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Asian American students felt intimidated, ignored, misunderstood, and singled out for criticism. Yet, little information is available with respect to the specific learning needs and experiences of Asian American students in the CN. Do they have to assimilate into the "dominant culture" in order to succeed in the nursing program? Is diversity necessary to foster students' learning and success? Bearing these questions in mind, we proposed a qualitative study via in-depth interview techniques to explore the learning experiences and needs of Asian American students in the CN.

Purposive sampling was used to recruit subjects for this study. Criteria for sample inclusion were nursing students who (1) were self-identified as Asian or Asian American and (2) currently enrolled in the nursing program. Sample

recruitment began with the list of Asian American students from the College's Student Office. Each of the Asian students from the list (N=40) was contacted by telephone. The initial telephone contact began with team members' introduction, providing information about themselves, the purpose of the study, the significance of participation, and the length and site of the proposed interview. Potential subjects were told that if they participated they would join a group of other Asian American students to discuss their learning experiences, viewpoints, and perspectives. They would be ensured privacy and confidentiality--specifically that their names would not be identified in any research publications and/or information dissemination. Their participation was strictly voluntary and they could withdraw from the study at any time they desired. After obtaining verbal consent, student researchers mailed all participants a simple survey, a consent form, and a tentative interview schedule. A total of eighteen Asian American students participated in this study, yielding a 45% response rate.[3] Sample characteristics were: women, 89%; living in the United States for more than five years, 94%; completion of high school education in the United States, 72%; junior level nursing students, 89%; speaking English as a second language, 99%; and holding a part time job while attending school, 27%. Ethnically, participants in this study comprised Chinese (N=3), Korean (N=1), and Vietnamese (N=14), and they defined their own cultures as "Chinese, Vietnamese, or Korean."

A Research Community

William Fite and I, faculty members in the DRI team, recruited four nursing students representative of a mix of academic levels (one graduate and three undergraduate students), and of racial backgrounds (two Asian Americans and two Caucasians). To prepare student researchers for undertaking this project, we provided a course syllabus that outlined the project goal, a tentative time-line for the completion of the project (February-May, 1998), suggested readings, and the research proposal. Within the context of the research goal, four major research questions were formulated: 1) how have Asian American students perceived their educational experiences in the CN? 2) what are their

Faculty team leaders Lin Zhan and William H. Fite

learning needs? 3) what are the barriers and the beneficial strategies that promote their learning? and 4) what suggestions do they have for the improvement of their educational experiences in the CN?

Immediately, we encountered a challenge: how to build an effective research team and to form a research community to reach our goals in the one-semester time frame. At the beginning, four students involved in the project did not know each other and few of them had known the faculty. In a sense, we all came as strangers. Most of the students joined the group with a motive to earn three credits--especially the two undergraduate students who needed three credits to graduate in June 1998. We began our group process with team building, starting with students and faculty who learned about each other, communicated confusion and caution, outlined problem solving strategies, and began to make decisions. In early group seminars, for example, we discussed the rationale and significance for studying the learning needs of Asian American students in the CN, solicited feedback from the student researchers in terms of their views and ideas on this proposal, assessed students' research skills and their basic understanding of diversity, and emphasized the necessity of team efforts and time management for the completion of this project. After the initial assessment, we found that even though all students had taken the research theory course, only one student had experience in conducting qualitative and quantitative research. We all had some conceptions of diversity, but none of us had any experience in using the university as a site of inquiry for conducting diversity research.

To reach the project goal, we worked on the identification of existing individual skills and group differences. First, we used racial differences (Asians and Caucasians) as a racial and cultural learning basis for both student researchers and the researched. When Asian researchers interviewed Asian students, the research subject felt less intimidated, therefore creating a way to establish rapport between the researcher and the researched. Pairing an Asian student researcher with a Caucasian student researcher set the stage for learning from each other and accepting differences. Secondly, the identification of skills and wisdom of the group members initiated a delegation of research responsibilities and tasks. Delegating was based on a skill-match and each delegatee was given authority in a particular area. For example, the graduate student team member was a clinical manager and therefore was assigned to be a leader in organizing and coordinating the project process. Another student with previous research experience was assigned to be a group leader in research-related questions. Delegating tasks in this way gave student researchers a sense of autonomy, responsibility, and accountability. Thirdly, we discussed the group process/stages that helped students understand certain group behaviors, dynamics, differences, conflicts, and purposes of the group. Finally, each group member was exposed to the basic concepts of group membership and responsibilities--individually and collectively--and negotiated interviewing schedules. In this stage, we (the faculty) were directive in order to keep the group focused while

encouraging different views, opinions, concerns, and thoughts. This approach helped group members gain a sense of purpose and responsibility. To manage time effectively, the group made a master plan with a time frame for undertaking the DRI project.[4]

As group members felt more trusting toward one another, their roles became more explicit, and our role as faculty became less directive, allowing students to more openly exchange ideas concerns, creations, and to air disputes. Using both a "hands-off" and "situational" approach, we seemed to dance between giving directions/instructions and participating in the group process. Participation is more than the formal sharing of ideas and decisions. It is cooperation and dialogue in which the faculty members' own operating rules and values are tested. When group conflicts surfaced, we helped to identify the root of the problem and worked with the group to manage conflicts. When students were uncertain about research methodology, teaching took place.

Once in the group seminar, anxiety was generated and tension felt among some group members during the discussion of qualitative research methods. A lack of certain skills and knowledge in conducting qualitative research seemed important factors here. Often, uncertainty creates anxiety, and minimizing anxiety requires new skills. Diversity inquiry requires researchers to have appropriate skills for communicating with people in various cultures. To help students, we detailed some critical skills, such as how to "cue-in" to what participants were talking about relative to the topic under discussion, what stages to go through in focus-group interviewing, how to create a climate in which research subjects could express their views freely and comfortably, and how to minimize a responsive set in the interview process.[5] To reinforce student learning, we rehearsed prior to the first focus group interview. During the rehearsal, some students acted as interviewees while others were the interviewers and observers. At the end of the rehearsal, we critiqued the process. This exercise familiarized students with some of the critical skills in qualitative inquiry: establishing rapport, being a moderator and facilitator, asking probing questions, interacting with the participants verbally and nonverbally, and observing group dynamics.

Another strategy to minimize students' anxiety was to reinforce their strengths in research and assure them of our support. Each student had at least one critical skill or strength to offer the project, which translated into the role of 1) an organizer (conducting the group seminars), 2) an interviewer (conducting interviews), 3) a coordinator (communicating with group members and consolidating each member's feedback), and 4) a literature searcher. Clear roles and expectations of group members affected the communication and execution of our research plans which included recruiting the sample, designing survey questions and interview schedules, writing up the informed consent, setting up interview schedules, and collecting, transcribing and analyzing data. In this process, the group acquired diverse skills and wisdom, and became cohesive.

Group cohesiveness was further enhanced through a group problem-solving technique. For example, when one student researcher had difficulty recruiting the requisite number of students needed for the sample by telephone, the entire group--faculty and students--intervened and identified the problem which was due, in part, to how the telephone message was conveyed. Instead of asking Asian American students to come to us for this study--focusing on the convenience of the researcher, we rephrased the sentence as: "We would like to hear from you about your learning needs and experiences. Your perspectives will help the faculty provide better education for you and for students like you"--thus focusing on the interests of the research subject. This strategy worked, and the sample recruitment was successful. As the research proceeded, the group became increasingly committed and cooperative. The faculty role was then to serve as mentors and facilitators with students now in charge of the research process.

Yet, at the same time, we faced another challenge--we needed to deepen our understandings of diversity issues. The University-wide DRI seminars[6] as well as our group seminars opened a window of opportunities for members of the DRI cohort to share their struggles, either conceptually or technically. They enabled us to learn from one another, to share quite often the similar struggles and frustrations, and to work together. Equally significant, students and faculty used seminars as a platform for dialogue and debate, and for deepening our understandings of diversity and its implications for higher education. At one DRI cohort seminar, Clark Taylor, a faculty researcher from another DRI team, raised the critical question about *"Diversity for what?"* This question led our group to think and rethink how to link our data to the deeper meaning of diversity. On another occasion, our group presented initial data analysis to the DRI cohort, with an analysis from interview data suggesting that "Asian American students were not assertive." This analysis generated heated discussion within the DRI cohort. Critical questions were raised: "Whose concept of assertiveness is it anyway?" "Is assertiveness valued in Asian cultures?" One researcher from another DRI group said: "If Asian students can resist harsh and discriminatory treatments, they are assertive..." What a powerful statement that was!

Faculty team leaderTony Van Der Meer helped reframe the debate on Asians' assertiveness for the DRI cohort.

Research team members Victoria Strakaluse, Jian Rong Liu, and Jeanette Livello.

This was the hidden curriculum--ideas, opinions, debates, discussions, dialogues relating to concepts and meanings of diversity--that helped students and faculty in the DRI to blend their knowledge of research with a sense of humanity, with the art of searching, with critical thinking, with values underlying practice in varying social and cultural contexts. Significantly, in the research process, connections were made and a research community was formed.

One student researcher reported:

> ***"We became friends during and after the research. By the end of the semester, we felt we were so attached to each other by a special bond that we wanted to get together just to chat and relive the wonderful experiences we had. We wished we could stay and learn together again sometime in the future. We felt we established a shared understanding and appreciation of the cultural diversity by working and learning together during that project. We felt we grew and became stronger with the project, and we felt that we're members of the university-wide diversity community..."***

Student-Centered Inquiry

The DRI provided a student-centered learning experience. Often, students learn research theory in the classroom where they are evaluated in terms of their success in making statistical inferences for given samples or in using a step-wise/linear regression model to analyze a myriad of variables. The DRI experience de-centered the faculty and allowed students to become the center of learning. Not only did students conduct research, but they also experienced searching and researching as a *gestalt*, as a whole, and a pattern of interrelated phenomena which included: Asian American students' learning experiences and environment, faculty views of diversity courses, the impact on white students of taking courses that focused on Africana /Black Studies, diversity debates in higher education, educational institutions and their relationships to students learning, and understandings of diversity. These interrelated phenomena created a panorama in which students found a way to learn and to criticize what had been learned. In this process, faculty were no longer mediating between the content and the student. The students were no longer "doing battle" with the content. Rather, we transformed the conventional and dogmatic notions of research methods which draw rigid distinctions between researcher and research subject by paying attention to diversity--the hidden curriculum of the DRI. The students invested themselves in the meaning of learning and therefore, their realities.

According to student researchers:

> ***"I never liked research before. This experience really changed me. Research information was powerful and the research process itself was educational... I cannot believe that I was a part of that..."***

> ***"Before, I just thought to finish my three credit requirements, just another independent study. The research experience made me involved, engaged, and motivated to get the bottom of the problem. It was such a high note before my graduation."***

Student-centered learning equalizes the traditionally hierarchical power of faculty-student dynamics. In the DRI inquiry, faculty and students worked together to advance their ideas and their working understandings of diversity, and viewed each other as interdependent social-cultural beings. The faculty-student relationship shifted, so that faculty and students became co-learners, and teaching, learning, and evaluation coexisted. Although students were not always able to memorize some desired answers about which method is legitimate, which measure is reliable and valid, and what corrected statistical numbers are, they caught a glimpse of other valuable human experiences and developed insights and awareness

that transported them beyond these answers to consider the patterns and deeper meanings of research data. Perhaps, the DRI process provided an avenue for personal growth and enlightenment which may be just as valuable to society, to the profession, and/or to the learner.

Student researchers noted:

> ***"This experience made me more open to see realities. I found that I became more sensitive to other students' needs. I think that anyone who can speak another language is smart enough. How can we judge them because they have heavy accented English, it is unfair."***

> ***"I am thankful for this eye-opening experience. It has made me to see what students with an ethnic background go through on a daily basis. I have come to the conclusion that you can't teach cultural awareness in a book. It is all rooted in lived experiences."***

"Awakening" - The Route to Experiences of Human Emotion

The DRI research took us on a route to experiences of self-reflections and emotions. Unlike the rigorous methodological approaches of empirical inquiry that often preclude large interpretations of the forces that shape both the researchers and the researched, the qualitative approach explores human phenomena based on lived experiences. Still, in most qualitative inquiry, researchers tend to inscribe ***others*** and seek to hide themselves under a veil of neutrality or objectivity. Quite often, the researcher him/herself consciously carries no voice, body, race, class, or gender, and recognizes no hyphen with what is being researched. To unveil the "truth" of human existence and experience, researchers must realize that what we see is what we perceive, and that the meaning of any experience depends on struggles over the interpretation and definitions of that experience. Researchers should bring their human dimensions into both the research processes and the analysis of outcomes, rejecting the notion of total objectivity in research. Due to this complexity of human dimensions, we faced a special challenge: how to interpret data, either quantitatively or qualitatively, and what and whose values to add to these data.

As noted previously, the interpretation of "assertiveness" in the group's initial analysis made us mindful of our own subjectivity and bias. On one Sunday, our group spent more than seven hours reexamining our own perceptions, values, bias, and meanings, and how these perceptions influenced the way we analyzed data. This process shed light on how we ought to view raw data through our

relatively discolored lenses. During the discussion, two major questions were asked: 1) are we imposing our own values on the data? and/or 2) are we imposing the dominant-culture's values on the data? If so, all of our data needed to be reexamined in the cultural and social perspective of the research subject. In this hours-long meeting, we shared a lot of own experiences and limitations. We began to hear the "voices" of the researched Asian American students--to feel their pain and suffering, and to find meanings-in-contexts. We realized that the most critical ethical obligation of qualitative research is to describe the experience of the researched as well as the researcher in the most faithful way possible.

Student researchers expressed:

> ***"As I transcribed these data, I felt so sad, depressed, and very heavy...;"***
>
> ***"I am an Asian American student and may go through the same painful experience. I felt depressed...;"***
>
> ***"How could Asian American students be treated that way in the College of Nursing? I felt their pain, so painful ...;" "This is the very first time I realized what students of color went through in the educational process; The first time I heard their often silenced voices... so powerful, so emotional, I want to cry ... "***
>
> ***"It is so easy to fall into one's own schema of thinking. When we initially analyzed data, we used our own colored lens to view data; after examining our own stereotyping, biases, we saw these data in different ways. We tried to separate our own biases from factual data... that is what I called transformation because I changed, and I view things differently now, not just in my own little world."***

This was an awakening moment! We realized that for diversity research, both the object of investigation--a web of languages, symbols, and institutions--and the tools by which investigation is carried out--share inescapably the same pervasive context: the human world. That moment we took a journey close to real experiences of our own humanity and emotions. In this seven-hours-long meeting, the group generated a list of key ideas, words, phrases, and actual quotations reflective of the respondents' viewpoints (*coding*), formulated and clustered common threads in the data (*recoding*), identified recurrent words, phrases and themes (*theme finding*), and documented exceptions (*variations*). The group analyzed the meanings attached to participants' viewpoints in the cultural context. Alongside the interview data analysis, we analyzed our survey questionnaires, which provided additional contextual information. By the end of this meeting, our

data analysis had come closer to the realities of Asian American students experiences in the CN. Our three major themes are *increasing cultural sensitivity, improving teaching,* and *interacting encouragingly.* Asian American students in the CN called for an educational environment in which their racial and cultural differences are understood and respected, their learning styles are considered, their interaction with faculty is encouraged, their accented English is accepted, and their learning needs are met.

The way our researchers appraised given moments in data transcription and analysis was linked to our emotional responses, and it was precisely in these emotional moments that we became aware of our own insensitivity. In the final DRI research conference, student researchers presented our study. One student researcher in our DRI team was quoting Asian American students' narratives from the interview:

> ***"... One day, my friend and I went to see a professor for help. We both failed the first exam. While I was waiting outside, the professor spoke very loud and I overheard she said to my friend 'you have to withdraw from this course.' I was so frightened. I knew the professor would say the same thing to me. Immediately, I went to the registrar and withdrew myself from this course;"***

The presenter was in tears, but continued to quote another Asian American student' saying:

> ***"I want to be a nurse. I had a lot of working experience as an accountant. When I worked in a doctor's office, I felt that being a nurse I could help others in sickness. I was hurt when I was told that nursing was not for me."***

The presenter stopped, could not continue, in tears... That moment the entire conference room was quiet--a moment of silence--as if had we been "suffocated" ... We were in tears, experiencing sadness, shock; we were angry, upset, touched, outraged... At this moment, cognitive consciousness reached to the level of being emotionally aware of what had gone wrong in the CN. Paying attention to our emotional responses deepened our cognitive search for the meaning of diversity. I was in tears... no words could describe how I felt, nor had I expected the data to have such powerful impact on me. In the process of cognitive and emotional uncovering, we created new connections, identified new meanings, and searched new possibilities--all calling for changes, for a better nursing education that embraces diversity and humanity.

Diversity research is more than just content. It helps researchers to re-interpret and deepen their own values and perspectives. It reveals the relationship between individuals and their worlds; the relationship between what was and what

can be. It uncovers the complexity of real connections between apparently unrelated phenomena. Regardless of debates in higher education about which realities are legitimized and which are not, which books to read, what information to process and use, what skills to perfect, what norms to follow, which culture to socialize, and what rules to execute, if we truly want to promote the learning of our students, we must foster in them and in ourselves an understanding of the relationships between their individual lives and the encompassing world.

One student researcher reflected on DRI experience:

> ***"These experiences we gathered through our interviews were so true to this population that we researchers, as students ourselves, could almost experience the same pain as they did. The best part of this research effort was to show how the topic of diversity could relate to human sufferings; therefore, awake people from insensitivity. Many of us who were among those touched, actually were experiencing a movement of awakening from cultural insensitivity. We took many things around us for granted. Once we heard those stories by the students, we were shocked and saddened, not because we heard the sad things, but because we were not aware of the sad things happening in front of our eyes. We felt sorry, not because this kind of sad things had happened, but because how could we allow this kind of thing to happen? It was the insensitivity that was the answer. I believe many of us cried or felt like crying for this reason. What happened should not happen. We all have the liability for not preventing it from happening . . . "***

Diversity Imperative

What have we gained from the DRI experience? Surely, we have learned more about some of the learning experiences of Asian American students in the CN. We identified some of their learning needs, and listened to their suggestions. We heard their voices. We felt their pain and the suffering caused by their being ignored, and discouraged. We applauded their suggestions. We connected ourselves to their experiences.

But the DRI experience goes beyond what we learned. We began to echo Asian American students' voices in the dissemination of our research information. Our DRI team presented the project at the Fourth Annual Conference on Undergraduate Research, Scholarly, Creative, and Public Service Activities, sponsored by the Massachusetts Public System of Higher Education on May 1, 1998 at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. Our DRI report was further disseminated to all faculty members in the College of Nursing. With administrative support a

faculty retreat was held, which provided opportunities for the faculty to respond to the DRI report. In the retreat, the CN faculty raised issues and concerns; some shared their experience of interactions with Asian American and other students of color. Some told of pedagogical strategies in facilitating the learning of ethnic students; some disclosed their own insensitivity and limitations; and some remained silent. In these responses to the diversity issue, the major themes that emerged in the faculty retreat were a sense of awareness, and a sense of urgent need for change, individually and/or institutionally.

What we have learned in the DRI experience is not just how a group works as a team, how research is conducted, how information is disseminated, but what diversity means. To find the meaning of diversity, we must ask ourselves: Toward what goal and for what end was the DRI created? What are our ethical obligations? In the past, voices of Asian American students in the CN have often been ignored or silenced. The DRI project provided the very first opportunity for them to share their experiences, stories, feelings, worries, wishes, and dreams. *This in itself is a notable achievement*! The voices of Asian American students help us recognize the diversity of human dimensions, experiences, needs, and barriers. We as researchers have ethical obligations not only to describe and disseminate research findings faithfully, but also to unfreeze the past in order to "undo;" that is, to bring about changes for the betterment of higher education and in particular, of nursing education.

Students' diverse voices carry important implications for nursing education. The danger in assessing and responding to any ethnic group is that of stereotyping and using stereotypes to quickly judge and generalize about observed cultural differences. Social interaction between faculty and students is a continuous process by which one person communicates with another through written or oral language, gestures, facial expressions, body language, and other symbols, and by which culture is transmitted and preserved. Cultural differences as well as behaviors have significant impact on the way we teach and the way our students learn. It is essential for the faculty to assess not only students' cultural differences in learning but also our own values and cultural perspectives, and the way that the latter impacts our teaching and interactions with students. A positive educational environment requires more than the avoidance of prejudicial statements. It requires faculty to step out of our own "comfort zone" and reach out to students who are otherwise neglected and even worse, discriminated against. A conducive educational environment requires more than "cultural sensitivity." It requires multicultural and diversity education, particularly if education is to be personally meaningful, socially relevant, culturally accurate, pedagogically sound, and politically responsible. A conducive educational environment means that students must be *empowered* to share their diversity, to respect their own cultures, and to be a part of the educational community.

At UMB, there are growing numbers of immigrant students from Asian and other countries where first languages are not English and whose home cultures are

not based on a Eurocentric model. For faculty who teach within the framework of the Eurocentric model, students with English as a second language are viewed as having a major learning "deficit." Yet, the DRI study found that it is not language per se but cultural insensitivity in the educational environment that poses obstacles to student learning. Often, Asian American students are perceived as passive learners in the classroom. Yet, our research findings indicated that they could participate actively if provided with a supportive environment and a place to which they feel they "belong." They could think critically if their cultural differences were understood and their hard work was appreciated. Their articulations, sensitivity, desire for learning, active participation as research subjects in the DRI research, and insightful suggestions for the improvement of teaching, are the best testimony to refute the notion of "silent, deficit, and passive Asian learners."

Often, Asian American students receive poor evaluations in clinical settings where nursing practice is based on the perspective of only one cultural or racial group of the clients--white, and middle-class. Yet, as Asian American students reach out to diverse communities, their racial identity, their cultural knowledge, and their bilingual skills may affect positively the care of those who are otherwise medically under-served or have no access to health services. Imagine a woman needing emergency care who only speaks Vietnamese. Which of the graduates would provide timely and effective care -- the monolingual English speaker or the bilingual Vietnamese speaker who persisted, despite being told that she/he could not become a nurse? To fit the needs of a heterogeneous society, effective care can no longer come in a single form. Inattention to cultural diversity is no longer merely morally negligent, it is also professionally and socially irresponsible.

Students' voices in the DRI raise our social consciousness. In nursing education, students of color often encounter "double jeopardies." First, they are expected to assimilate into the "dominant culture" (although being "accepted" by the dominant culture may not serve the purpose of culturally competent care to diverse populations and communities). Students are often dissected, analyzed, and folded into some nursing faculty's ideas of a nurse, or a sociologist's or economist's idea of how one lives, or a psychologist's interpretation of how one's personality is formed. But there ought to be no list of how to recognize an educated individual, because education is not about either individuals *or* their worlds; it is about the relationships between the two. If teachers present knowledge in a way that reflects values of the "dominant culture," students from non-dominant cultures who have not been exposed to, or do not value the dominant culture, may feel inferior, rejected, out of place, or perhaps, hostile. Assimilation of one culture to another disconnects the critical relationship between the individuals and their worlds--the worlds full of meanings, significance, and realities. Such disconnections make students feel that they do not belong to the educational institution. As a subject observed: "*I feel neglected by professors because they are from a different culture.*" "*Being a minority made me feel inferior to others...*" Such disconnection

disables our fundamental tenets of education: a sense of agency, a sense of responsibilities and accountability, and a sense of connection.

The second feature of "double jeopardy" that nursing students encounter lies in nursing education itself. Nursing has already been painfully aware that its education, being primarily education for women,[7] has suffered from the social-historical political forces which have limited opportunities for women in society. Nursing education has been oppressed due to the nurse-equals-woman-equals-nurse phenomenon. Perpetuated oppressions directly impact nursing education and even worse, there is a tendency for oppressed groups to oppress and impose psychological damage on Asian American students who were told: "Nursing is not for you." Whose right is it to make such a judgement?! If we allow perpetuated oppression, we socialize students into a system of oppression and control, which is often perpetuated to maintain the status quo. As nursing calls for increasing ethnic variety within its ranks, so must it integrate cultural competency into its educational experience.[8] What researchers and the research subjects called for in the DRI inquiry is an approach to education and practice that frees human potential and liberates human thinking; that allows one to develop rational and moral capacities, as well as emotional, expressive, intuitive, esthetic, and personal capacities; that brings one's full sense of self to bear on one's life work--in this case--caring for the sick.

The purpose of higher education for nurses is not only to identify nursing more with other academic fields, to improve its research and theoretical base, and to advance nursing as a profession, but also to require general education that blends humanities and liberal arts into the science of nursing. Nursing concerns human responses to health and illness problems, and human responses are diverse, and culturally and socially embedded. Yet, nursing curricula have been largely based on the model of behavioral objectives which do not allow the search for meanings--intangibles of caring that are related to a deeper understanding of human experience, and of the political forces that affect it.[9]

The DRI experience offered a hidden curriculum that allowed students to blend diversity knowledge with science, with multiple ways of knowing, with individual reflections and emotions, and with understanding the relationship between individuals and their worlds. To truly endorse nursing's philosophical underpinning: humanity, diversity has to be embraced within the core of the nursing curriculum. Existing ideologies of domination and oppression must be examined critically to develop vital consciousness among nurse educators, administrators, and students.[10]

One year after the DRI project, I received a note from one student researcher:

> ***"...After I graduated from nursing school, I started working at a world renowned hospital in Boston, Massachusetts. In my first week of work I have five Spanish-speaking patients. It***

was very difficult communicating with these people. I relied on their family members and the unit assistant to translate to me. This is the first time I became aware that I had a handicap. The following week I overheard a physician asked his Russian patient "Why don't you speak English?" This angered/ infuriated me . . . My professional goal is to become a transcultural nurse. As a professional nurse it is my responsibility to meet the needs of patients from diverse backgrounds."

DRI student researcher Candice Taggart

Nursing education could learn from the DRI experience to revisit nursing as a human science, to practice nursing with humanity and caring, to integrate nursing's unique contributions to ethics, epistemology, and esthetics in its education, to use a student-centered paradigm, and to embrace diversity. As we search for the meaning of diversity, we are helped by these Asian American student research subjects who bravely shared with us their educational experiences, their feelings, and their insights. Most importantly, these students want to be encouraged to hold on to dreams built through extraordinary human sufferings and painful life journeys. In the words of one student, *"...I came to the United States by boat, with nothing... I started to work in a community as a volunteer. I began to realize that my dream is to help people in sickness. I want to be a nurse."*

So here we are, with people to care for, health to restore, hopes to fulfill, visions to realize, futures to construct, and dreams to build! We have a unique societal mission: to care for the vulnerable, and, sadly, the vulnerable are often ethnic minorities, the poor, the disabled, the sick, and the aged. To fulfill our mission, nursing must form a partnership with people from diverse backgrounds. Simply for this reason, diversity in nursing is a *must*! Diversity education is *imperative* for all nursing faculty, administrators, and students. As the United States becomes ever more diverse, we have both a social and professional responsibility to understand diverse populations for whom we care and with whom we work. American society today is really a connection of intertwining cultures, each bringing its own character and palpable contributions to the nation.[11] Higher education is no exception. How we deal with this interconnectedness bears significant implications on the quality of life for all. ■

Acknowledgments

Gratitude goes to the Ford Foundation for providing this opportunity for DRI inquiry; to all DRI team members - students and faculty alike - for offering insights and support in this often challenging and sometimes painful process; to student researchers for their ability to explore the past invisible and untouchable area; to Jian Rong Liu, a very special student researcher for her leadership in helping us in touch with human dimensions; and to all student participants for their bravery in sharing the realities of their existence and experience in higher education and most significantly, for reminding us as educators and therefore our commitment and responsibilities

Notes

[1]This research is a part of the University-Wide Diversity Research Initiative funded by the Ford Foundation. The research was conducted in Spring of 1998.

[2] The research team included two faculty members: William Fite and Lin Zhan, and four nursing students. Among these nursing students, there are one graduate student, two senior level students, and one junior level student.

[3] The major reason for Asian American students who declined to participate in this study was due to schedule conflicts and other commitments during that semester.

[4]The master plan outlined the time frame and specific tasks for conducting this project: February- recruit sample, mail survey, set-up interview schedules; March- conduct both focus-group and individual interviews, transcribe interview data, and analyze data (both survey and interviewing data); April - complete all interviews and data transcriptions, continue to analyze data, and evaluation; May- write and disseminate research findings.

[5]Responsive set bias: The measurement error introduced by the tendency of some individuals to respond to items in characteristic ways, independently of the item's content.

[6] In addition to our weekly group seminar, three DRI teams met together as a seminar 6 times during the course of the semester.

[7]Male nurses comprise 4% in the United States, according to sources from National League for Nursing and American Nurses Association (1996-98).

[8]Zhan, L (1996). Rethinking nursing research: Health of populations and outcome measures. *Health and Policy: Prism.* National League for Nursing, New York.

[9] Bevis, EO & Watson, J (1989). *Toward a caring curriculum: A new pedagogy for nursing.* New York: National League for nursing Press.

[10]Zhan, L & Cloutterbuck, J (1998). Nursing, A New Day, A New Way. *New England Journal of Public Policy*, (13) 1: 11-33

[11]Zhan, L (Ed., 1999) *Asian Voices: Asian and Asian American Health Educators Speak Out.* New York: National League for Nursing & Boston: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.

Research and Research Methods in the Diversity Research Initiative

by Tim Sieber
Anthropology

Introduction

After twenty-five years of observation and experience as a faculty member, it would seem a simple matter to describe research and its place in the life of faculty and students at UMB. However, the Diversity Research Initiative (DRI) has challenged most of the assumptions that traditionally guide the theory and practice of teaching research in the academy, and presents an interesting story that needs to be told. In the discussion which follows, I will provide an overview of the unusual scope and character of research in the DRI, based on my three semesters as DRI Director, and my work helping to coordinate seven of the project's student-faculty teams.

Research is a central theme of all that the DRI did and aimed to achieve, the glue that held the project together, and linked its scholarly, teaching, and service components. Diversity research was the *raison-d'être* for the creation of the collaborative faculty-student teams which carried out the work of the project. Problems and questions of research comprised the content of the educational experience mentored and taught by the faculty, and constituted the core of student learning in the project. Research activity that focused on the university as the site of inquiry offered itself as a new kind of vehicle for student participation in the affairs of the university, and served as a way to struggle against the "disidentification with school" that social psychologist Claude M. Steele has documented among underrepresented student populations in higher education (Steele 1992). Finally, the guiding understanding of the DRI research program was that its projects would have an "application" — they would contribute to the betterment of the institution, specifically through enhancing the effectiveness with which the university acts to include its diverse student population in its educational mission.

It was expected that the DRI research would spur local campus action in a number of programs and units. Five of the thirteen projects studied issues of inclusion for different student groups: gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered students; Latino students; students with disabilities; Asian American nursing students; and diverse CPCS students. Four other projects concerned evaluation of the educational impacts of the existing diversity curriculum in the areas of

Asian American Studies, Africana Studies, the overall nursing curriculum, and the CPCS Cultural Awareness competency. The four remaining projects examined diversity in the university's public relations and admissions marketing, cross-cultural conflict among students, campus musical programs as an expression of cultural diversity, and students' family beliefs about diversity. Virtually every project had implications for evaluation and reform of UMB programs.

The institutional, UMB-focused nature of the research has been a key defining feature of the project. Usually the university is just a home base from which to conduct research on other domains, but in this case all project participants were in some sense studying their own institutional context. They all had a serious personal connection to the meaning and potential application of the research findings. This presented all participants with an unusual, sometimes delicate situation: both student and faculty participants were studying an institution which defines their academic futures. This had implications for special ethical considerations in the project, but also lent an extra measure of honesty to participants' engagement in the work. All these unusual features of the project made DRI research far more complicated, and multi-faceted, than the materials usually counted as scholarly research in the academy.

> ***The challenge in a very brief period of fourteen weeks is to teach research, develop a research design, implement it, but teaching people how then to do interviews, which is a different thing from teaching research, and giving people experience for that. Talking about coding, teaching the process of coding, teaching the process of analysis, and then having enough time to write a report and have people really own it. That is an enormous amount of stuff to do with people who had never done this before. It would be a lot to do with people who were experienced researchers. So, that was the broad challenge.***
>
> ***— Professor Clark Taylor, Spring 1998 Cohort.***

The Research Process

The Project had four cohorts of faculty-student teams, 13 groups in all, extending over four semesters, from Spring 1997 through Fall 1998. In this fundamentally experimental project, the DRI staff learned a great deal and perfected our work through trial-and-error, and constant collaborative self-assessment by project participants. By the final cohort of student-faculty teams, we had come to understand well and to be able to conceptualize the complex staging of the research

process that all DRI teams had to go through in the short time of one semester. The faculty coordinator of each team needed first of all to formulate a general research topic, prepare a syllabus of work, and assemble a student team. Once the team was in operation, a number of different tasks and challenges had to be handled, or at least finalized, in succession:

1. **Formulating the research problem**
    - What is the problem?
    - Why is the problem important?
    - For what use or purpose should the research be done?
    - Guiding hypotheses or research questions

2. **Designing the research**
    - Literature search
    - Selection of appropriate methods and techniques
    - Delineation of relevant ethical and human subjects issues
    - Planning in terms of funding and time resources needed

3. **Developing the data collection instruments**
    - Constructing questions for inquiry
        - interview schedules
        - surveys
        - questionnaires

4. **Data collection**
    - Definition of research sample and/or population
    - Selecting and contacting subjects
    - Mechanics of data collection
        - interaction with subjects or informants
        - data recording
        - survey mailing and other techniques, where relevant

5. **Data analysis and interpretation**
    - Transcribing interview data
    - Identifying themes and variations in data
    - Coding of qualitative themes
    - Statistical analysis

6. **Reporting**
    - Writing up findings
    - New/unanswered questions
    - Recommendations

A consistent and reasonable complaint which came from faculty and students alike was that one 14-week semester was too short a time to work collaboratively on all necessary phases of such a project, from problem definition, to design of instruments, to data collection and analysis, and finally to report writing. In the end, the faculty coordinators in nearly every case simply had to do certain pieces by themselves in order to move the process along. Arriving at a decision about how to collaborate, and the continual close conversation and consultation that it involves, are time-consuming parts of the collaboration process itself.

> ***There is a real tension between the three goals of student training, producing serious research, and building a caring learning community, because achieving one goal means you find it difficult to achieve the other two goals. Figuring out how to work on reaching all three of those goals in a holistic way is a real challenge.***
>
> ***— Professor Peter Kiang, Spring1997 Cohort.***

Student Learning

Throughout this complex project timeline, the goal was never simply instrumental, to move the project along as fast as possible toward completion, because DRI projects were also educational. The major consideration was always, "What are the students learning at this particular phase, from the deliberations we are having about this phase of the project?" As faculty coordinators Clark Taylor's and Raymond Liu's narratives both suggest, tending to student learning and group process as integral parts of the project could slow the pace of a group's research program considerably, but this always seemed educationally justifiable. Student learning, in fact, was truly the great strength of the project, and students' own reports consistently judged their DRI participation to be one of the most important and satisfying learning experiences of their student careers.

> ***In order to continue this research, I had to find some reasons in what this research gives me. Knowledge? Skills? Relationships with alumni? Friendship? Communication skills? Now, I got everything. Taking this class made me comfortable to express myself. It was good practice. I feel that I have found a niche for myself in school.***
>
> ***— Yuko Matsubara, student, Spring 1997 Cohort.***

Academic content, of course, was important--the learning and practicing of real research skills, usually new concepts for most student participants. Student learning, however, went far beyond this. One significant area for student learning was in gaining a better sense of UMB as an institution and of their place within it-

-this might mean, for example, understanding the special character or place of their home program within the broader university, or the institutionalized barriers to *fuller inclusion of student minorities*. These understandings were in part due to the deeper, more critical view that a research orientation offers toward the university, but also to the fact that all DRI projects used UMB itself as the site of research.

Their research tended to give students a new vision of how they fit into the university, how their own education was shaped by its structures and traditions, and a new sense of collaboration, concern, and partnership with the institution. In interacting with project teams, I often observed students' exhilaration over what they saw as the importance of their work in the project, and their almost universal desire to continue working beyond the allotted one semester. They appeared to believe their work in the project really mattered to other people (in stark contrast with their usual course assignments), and that their work was bringing them into a fuller, more knowledgeable membership in the institution that went well beyond their usual roles as students, defined as passive educational consumers of courses. I believe that part of the excitement of the project for students was that the DRI allowed them both to *understand* and to *envision improvement* of the university as a student-serving institution. This kind of consciousness is regrettably absent in most students' experiences at our commuter university, where their constant goings and comings make their connections to UMB fragmentary and partial. Another important source of rich experiential learning lay in the development of new kinds of collaborative relationships with other students and faculty from throughout the university, which I will address shortly.

Faculty roles

DRI groups did not operate in the same way as the classes that faculty in general are accustomed to. In the project, the faculty were seriously challenged to adapt to a new kind of arrangement they were not familiar with, except for the one or two who had previous experience in collaborative work with students (and even they had never experienced collaborations at this level of intensity). The main challenge was to work collaboratively with students, outside the authority hierarchy characteristic of the usual university classroom, but still to exercise intellectual leadership and mentorship. There was a constant tension between facilitating and directing that called for real leadership skills in order to coordinate and motivate the overall team. Faculty made different decisions, depending on their personal styles and the dynamics of their groups, in mixing direction and facilitation. Some faculty left report-writing to the students, but others did most of the drafting work; some defined the research problem before they recruited students, but others devoted considerable project time to research definition through collaborative discussions with students after the group was formed.

The other part is that it's a transition for a lot of students. Because their relationship with professors is based on a power relationship. So coming to this project, you are asking them to make a transition. There is a different set of expectations.

— Professor Tony Van Der Meer, Spring 1998 Cohort.

Another challenge was for faculty to learn how to teach research methods to undergraduates, since while many were experienced in research, few had much experience in trying to teach their skills to others. For some faculty a great challenge (and source of satisfaction) was the opportunity to focus on diversity as the core subject of their research project.

It is significant as well that levels of faculty competence in research skills varied widely. Some were junior faculty still at developing stages of their own research careers. Some were not too skilled in the methods their projects used and potentially could fall short as coordinators and mentors for their students. Others were highly qualified, but had little experience working in truly collaborative ways with undergraduate students, who were essentially untrained in doing research. It is more common in the academy to collaborate with graduate student professionals in training, who help to carry out traditional disciplinary research, than it is to look to undergraduates as collaborators (several of the faculty coordinators had, in fact, primarily taught only graduate students). Thus, the DRI challenged many of our conventional notions about "training" and faculty authority in the academy. Faculty had to struggle and extend themselves in uncommon ways to teach, mentor, and coordinate the activities of their students. This could even include, as DRI faculty Raymond Liu notes, sharing pizza after hours and playing basketball with team members.

Teamwork and collaboration

The building of a new kind of student-faculty research community was always a central goal of the DRI. For the usual arts and sciences student, the DRI was a truly new experience, since most intellectual work and even research in regular academic programs is defined as an individual activity. In contrast, the DRI projects all involved team work, often with complex and shifting divisions of labor among students, and between students and professors. In general, students from the management, nursing, and public and community service colleges have more experience in group projects, at least among students, than students in the arts and sciences college.

By doing this research project I can honestly say that I am proud of myself and of my findings. I am proud of myself because many times I just wanted to throw in the towel and give up. I knew if I gave up I would not only let myself down but also let my peers down. That was not something I wanted to do. Research is very hard. It is time consuming and stressful. You need to learn how to be patient and deal with whatever comes your way. I am glad that I took on this project and hope our results will show our hard work and efforts.

— Stacy Pires, student, Spring 1997 Cohort.

The DRI posed a major challenge for all teams, and for faculty and students alike: to learn to manage the constant problem-solving, improvisation, and ongoing collective sense-making necessary in any research group, always under very real time pressure. Quick project decisions had to be made, to cite some examples, to scale back on ambitious sample sizes in order to meet deadlines or to manage survey administration, or to revise an interview schedule whose flaws only appeared after the first interviews were done. Also, no one could be quite certain how long students would need to master given research techniques, or to arrange for interviews with busy faculty research subjects. The DRI research process was unpredictable in many ways, as field research usually is.

Handling these problems collaboratively within the team required a sense of collective responsibility, and an intensity, even urgency, of learning experience and of work experience, not found in the ordinary university class, as Clark Taylor's chapter well illustrates. DRI research was not just another "class project," but an activity with higher institutional significance in which the faculty mentor and all their team members — as members of the university community -- possessed an important stake. For example, Peter Kiang was the principal architect of the university's Asian American Studies program, whose long-term impacts he and his students were studying in the DRI, partly as a strategy for designing further program development. The student members of this team were also majors in the department and thus had their own stake in understanding and improving the program. Clark Taylor is former director of the CPCS first-year Assessment Program, a large part of which involves the completion by new students of a Cultural Awareness competency. As former director and still active faculty member in this program, Clark was using findings to guide the college's reevaluation and revision of its diversity component. His student team members, as well, were all veterans of the program.

The students involved in the teams definitely responded positively to their collaborative element, and were especially thrilled to be working together with a faculty mentor as a kind of senior partner. This seemed to enhance, rather than diminish, the amount that the students felt they really learned through the project work, and their assessment of the significance and impact of their project. Not

only was there peer and student-faculty collaboration within teams, but regular project-wide seminar meetings brought together participants from across the teams, and offered a sense of wider collaboration in the project that connected students from different programs and colleges in ways that had never happened for most before.

> ***I think what I learned most from it was that the potential for learning in a small group research environment on campus with the professor. And it bleeds over to your other classes, too, you know. You take something away from it that tells you about how to do homework, why you have to do homework. And you see teachers differently. There may be a particular professor who thinks they are God, but you know they are not. Now that you've worked on a research project, they are much less intimidating. You feel empowered. You walk the halls of the classroom not as the lowly student one step above the cafeteria worker. You are now, potentially, you could be a professor, too, because you did some of what they did.***
>
> *— Lauren Craig Redmond, student, Spring 1998 Cohort.*

Methods and techniques of research

The DRI varied a lot over the course of the project in the emphasis given in different cohorts to qualitative and quantitative research methods. The choices made depended mostly on the particular methodological training of the faculty coordinator. At the same time, a number of faculty were new to field-based research in general and adopted methods in their DRI projects that were new or different from those they used in their own scholarly research. The field-based, institutional nature of DRI's research objectives strongly oriented the project in a general applied "social science" direction, and projects all drew heavily on social science field research methodologies (usually interviewing, focus groups, and/or survey questionnaires) in order to complete their investigations. This meant that the few faculty whose scholarly training lay elsewhere, in the humanities, for example, shared the status of research novice with their students. This was the case with musical composer David Patterson who coordinated the research group on music and campus diversity. David had never engaged in field-based social science research before, and learned through the project how to construct and administer social surveys, and how to perform computer-assisted analysis of quantitative results.

Seven projects used interviewing as a research method, three used focus groups, and five used survey research. Four of the projects used more than one of these methods. Although qualitative methods were easier for students to learn, and less technical, they were at the same time more complex and challenging to use

and interpret than they seem at first glance. For some novices, simply approaching strangers to ask for interviews, for example, was a mysterious, even frightening experience, and handling the recording, transcribing, and coding of extensive textual interview data could seem overwhelming.

(Left to Right) Student researchers Joseph Phillips, Patric McCormack, David Patterson(faculty team leader), Christine Gozick, and Sharon Crumrine.

Quantitative methods, especially survey research, are more mechanical. They can be planned and implemented in a shorter period of time, even through quick administration to large groups in university classes or over the telephone, which often fit the reduced DRI timetable. Different teams, depending on their projects and the associated methods, required consultants or other outside experts to help them learn and use new methods, and training in how to use various computer-based programs for statistical analysis and presentation of quantitative data, such as the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, and Microsoft Excel.

> ***By doing this project, I gained knowledge of research methods. After I finished the research I realized that how I saw research so easily before and how I took for granted group work. And also through the process of this project, I learned the valuable lesson that learning and teaching are not from the textbooks but from trial and error. And the true meaning of learning is learning from everyone around us; everyone is a learner and a teacher at the same time.***
>
> ***— Hyun Jung Lee, student, Spring 1997 Cohort.***

While some of the DRI student teams already had received some training in methodology in earlier courses at UMB (sometimes with their own DRI faculty coordinators), most participating students were receiving their first real experience in conducting field-based research. Even those who had "learned" research methods in earlier classes were pushing their mastery much further by using them in the field setting for the first time. Others, as in Lin Zhan's and Bill Fite's nursing research group, had been trained in survey methods, but initially knew nothing about the focus group methods which their research ended up using. Major challenges for the DRI, then, were devising ways of quickly teaching research methods to novices, and of helping everyone to apply formal methodological knowledge within the exigencies of a project-driven time frame.

Intensive mentoring and instruction in the project groups, supportive instruction in the DRI-wide seminar meetings, a great deal of trial-and-error, and plain hard work were necessary to move the projects along. The project staff hired, or

(Top) Graduate student Denisa Popescu training DRI students on EXCEL. (Bottom) Carolyne Arnold's team and Denisa Popescu. The training was specifically tailored to address the team's data analyzing needs.

arranged for outside experts, to offer workshops at project-wide seminar meetings, or to single teams. We distributed readings and manuals to participants, and fostered a great deal of mentoring among research teams themselves, especially among faculty, in order to meet the ongoing student demand for training. Usually the DRI drew on its own veteran faculty coordinators as consultants, especially Lin Zhan, Alison Gottlieb, and Beth Clemens. Lin mentored a less experienced faculty member in her cohort and provided useful counsel and research materials to faculty in the next DRI cohort. Alison and Beth are employed as full-time staff researchers at the University's Gerontology Institute. After her own project ended, Beth offered a much-needed workshop to DRI teams the following semester on the coding of qualitative data. During her semester of participation in the project, Alison acted as a consultant to others in the DRI-wide seminars on matters of research ethics, survey construction, and coding of data. Such sessions were usually quite interactive, focusing directly on research problems the teams were having at that point in time.

Most research methods courses at the university--and there are many--serve the interest and goals of particular disciplines and departments, and are normally conceived as pre-professional experiences for novices who hope to enter serious disciplinary-based research activity later in their careers. It is telling that there exist no generic research methods courses in the entire university. As a rule, discipline-based courses teach a particular set of research methods that are conventional and accepted in a particular field. The emphasis is on learning the craft of applying the methods, and if a criterion is applied to selection of the topic, then it is, "What is the conventional terrain of our discipline where we know that our particular methods work effectively?" Unfortunately, research methods are not taught as skills that can enhance the agency and aspirations of students, or faculty for that matter, as holistic human beings who can use these skills to understand and improve their own workplaces, schools and communities.

> ***I learned a lot, not in the classroom. You know, not in the typical classroom where you look in the textbook and you look at the steps on how to do research, how to do surveys. I learned that through first hand experience and I thought that was really good.***
>
> ***— Yen Phi Mach, student, Spring 1997 Cohort.***

In the DRI, on the other hand, research projects were chosen because they had direct implications for the quality of educational experience of the faculty and students who chose them. The goal was institutional betterment through research. Thus the question, "What is worth knowing and why?" always took precedence, and the question of what methods should best be used followed from that initial choice. In no group did the DRI teach research methods in the abstracted way common in university classes, where the focus is primarily on the mastering of the

methods themselves, disassociated from an understanding of substantive research issues, and where exercises for "applying" or "using" methods choose contexts or problems for heuristic purposes only. The exigencies of a collaborative, time-driven DRI project offered a compelling crucible for a practical, "real time" learning of how to do research. DRI projects were not simply academic exercises, another class project, but richly collaborative adventures done with others, driven by inner dynamics, sequencing, and time frames quite different from normal student work in classes.

Research Ethics

While research oriented, the DRI always conceived of its project groups as centered primarily on teaching and learning activities, and the projects as principally promoting the educational development of students. For this reason, students always received academic credit (normally in the coordinating faculty member's unit) for their DRI participation. Project groups, in fact, operated as "courses" with syllabi, regular meetings, and substantial academic content. The DRI advised faculty coordinators to follow the standard university policy on course-based research projects, that is, to seek any necessary Human Subjects approvals for research through available departmental-level review committees. As is the case in all course-based research projects, flexibility and speed in any such reviews is necessary to allow projects to meet the semester schedule for completion.

It was DRI-wide policy that each project should provide a simple, clear statement of the purpose of the research to all possible collaborators, so that each potential subject would have the right to decline participation without penalty. Oral as well as written representations were used, depending on the instrument or research technique employed. In Lin Zhan's and William Fite's nursing research project, for example, all student participants were sent letters outlining all these particulars. In addition, all projects were mandated to observe basic research ethics regarding protection of human subjects against repercussions or other harm, including confidentiality of responses. In the nursing research case, student participants in focus groups needed to have reassurance that their participation, and honest responses to questions about their ongoing classroom experiences, would not hurt their grades. In all the projects, almost all subjects were students, who may well have had similar concerns. Subjects were also reassured that personal identifications of individual respondents would be avoided in any permanent recording of data or in any public presentations of research results, whether oral or written.

In most cases, DRI research carried out by collaborative student-faculty teams as part of the DRI did not require any human subjects review at all, since it was policy-oriented, or "applied," normally concerning recognizably public behavior, and did not focus principally on private affairs of individuals in the university

community. A few of the projects, however, especially the project on gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered students, encountered difficulty collecting and engaging in public analysis of information without invading the personal privacy of the research subjects.

Research Outcomes

Research outcomes, as well as processes, were different in the DRI from those that usually occur in academic settings. From the beginning, there was a tension in the project between two not always compatible assumptions -- (1) that the research would be of good scholarly quality, and capable of generating publishable-quality findings of high reliability, validity, and significance that would have external professional credibility outside of UMass/Boston (i.e., more traditional academic measures of "research"), and (2) that the research would be fundamentally "applied" or policy-oriented and lead to improvement in UMB programs and operations. As noted earlier, some projects had an overtly evaluative purpose, such as Clark Taylor's project evaluating the teaching of the cultural awareness competency in CPCS, or Amy Rex-Smith's and Marion Winfrey's project to develop a checklist for evaluating diversity dimensions of courses in the College of Nursing.

Faculty were selected in accordance with one or both of these criteria, but not in accordance with any strategic plan for focused campus change. As a result, projects were very diverse in their goals, and quite mixed in their outcomes — some have already begun to yield research literature of interest to professionals outside of UMB, and others have been of more purely local interest and implications, but have begun to set into motion administrative and program changes as a result. The more successful projects have had both types of outcomes. For example, Peter Kiang's project on long-term student impacts of the Asian American Studies curriculum yielded data that were incorporated into program planning documents for the creation of an Asian American Studies major at UMB, were used to leverage additional research funds through a grant from a national foundation, were placed on the DiversityWeb WWW site sponsored by the American Association of Colleges and Universities, and finally were part of a publication for the educational journal, *Transformations*.

It is not only the type of issue studied in the research group, but how the faculty coordinators are positioned within the university structure, and the relation between the project focus and their normal area of scholarship that appear to strongly affect research outcomes. Where the faculty had a direct professional or institutional interest in the outcome of the research, they had strong professional incentives to exercise more focused intellectual leadership and follow-through after the conclusion of the semester-long project. These were projects where the faculty coordinators especially met two conditions: their field of research and publication concerned itself with issues of professional training and program evaluation or development, and they were positioned institutionally (usually

administratively) at UMB to implement DRI research findings or recommendations. Good examples here were Lin Zhan, Clark Taylor and Peter Kiang, all of whom were in a position to use research findings in their ongoing efforts to transform curricular programs they were directly involved in. In Lin Zhan's case, a report of her group's findings became a major item for discussion in her college's annual faculty planning retreat.

Projects where faculty were working outside their area of professional expertise, or where they were less well administratively positioned to apply research findings or recommendations, have tended to be slower going in their outcomes, and have required some technical support and follow-through from the DRI office itself. An example here would be Alison Gottlieb's team's project on faculty responses to students with disabilities. The team coordinator for this project is not normally involved in research on this topic, and her job responsibilities do not involve any service programs for disabled students. The DRI staff have helped to facilitate presentations of this research to College of Arts and Sciences department chairs, and to the University's undergraduate research conference, and distribution of a summary of the research findings to all university faculty.

Although the DRI will address overall assessment issues through the present monograph and through a general conference at the conclusion of the project, staff have left dissemination and follow-through activities related to particular research projects to the project groups themselves. As noted above, this has usually been handled by the faculty coordinator. In some cases where faculty efforts at follow-through have been absent, for different reasons, student participants on their own have engaged in more informal grass-roots political initiatives on campus as a result of their project. Participants in Beth Clemens' project on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered students, for example, have been hampered from publishing or formally distributing any of the results of their

(Left) Student researcher Chris Hart and and faculty team leader Alison Gottlieb. (Right) Student researcher Michelle Pirog. Both Chris and Michelle have been able to assist in disseminating their team's findings to the broader UMB community.

study, in order to protect the confidentiality of subjects. However, informally, the results of this study have influenced the work of the university's LGBT Center, as a student member of this research team subsequently became Center director. Subsequently, the LGBT Center instituted programs for more educational outreach to faculty, and to identify supportive faculty and other useful academic resources for student referral. The project findings were also used by the LGBT Center to leverage a grant for program development in these areas. Normally, however, regular student turnover makes follow-up difficult for students to manage: the majority of participants tend to graduate from the university soon after finishing their projects!

In hindsight, it seems a weakness of the DRI that more attention was not paid in advance to building into regular project procedures more attention to dissemination issues and to follow-up strategies for the research. Because of the pressing demands of managing ongoing research cohorts, the project staff usually left follow-through to the individual faculty to handle. The problem was that in cases where faculty were not clear in advance about their agenda for applying research results, the tendency was for little to happen as a result. The educational dimensions of the project for student learning, and in some cases its longer-term scholarly value, seemed enough to justify the work, and did not always in themselves promote efforts at application and follow-through. Student evaluation interviews show that in the absence of clear project-wide or research group discussion of these issues, students in some groups were anxious about what kind of follow-up attention or meaning their findings would have for institutional improvement. They feared, usually incorrectly, that their projects would simply be forgotten.

Regrettably, a few projects had more fundamental problems and have had few outcomes beyond student learning because they yielded final reports that were late or incomplete. This usually was due not only to the team's not being able to divide and manage the work of report writing. Failure to adequately report was also usually a sign of a troubled project, where student-faculty consensus about basic findings and their implications for follow up was never reached, mostly due to unresolved interpersonal conflicts within the teams, especially between faculty and students, that also hampered other phases of the investigation. Student grievances in these cases usually centered on perceived inadequate supervision and mentoring by these faculty, and faculty lack of experience with managing this kind of project, often accompanied by unrealistically high work expectations for students, and at times failure to collaborate effectively. Sometimes issues of diversity within the teams provided stumbling blocks to effective group process. Given the above discussion about the unfamiliarity of faculty and students with the challenging model of faculty-student collaboration used by the DRI, it is not surprising that a successful balance was not reached in every case. Fortunately, such cases were few in number.

Conclusions

For the comprehensive university whose mission is the creation of new knowledge through research activity, research is usually the prerogative of faculty

and advanced graduate students, underscoring and extending the academy's expert authority over important issues in human affairs. The significance of research for the academy usually stops at traditional professional or market measures of research value: number of scholarly publications reporting the research results, and the amount of supportive research monies generated for the institution. Further, where "institutional research" is at issue, as in UMB's case, the university's own bureau of institutional research operates as an instrument of the central administration who own and disseminate research findings and whose administrative questions define priorities for investigation.

In the way that it defined and attempted to practice research, the DRI departed dramatically from all of these traditional patterns. Faculty goals as DRI research team leaders extended far beyond "research" strictly defined, to include team-building, diversity awareness, and close mentoring of undergraduate students. For undergraduates, the main differences were, 1) involvement in a serious field research effort, 2) participation in collaborative research teams with faculty as part of a wider research community, 3) ongoing dialogue involving other project faculty and students throughout the university. The other significant departure from conventional research was that DRI investigations focused on the students' own home institution, the University of Massachusetts Boston. The DRI could thus draw on its own participants' deep knowledge and personal aspirations regarding UMB. There were major benefits from this not only in the educational development of student and faculty participants, but also in the quality of the research done. Other results of our "local" orientation were more effective definition of relevant research questions, more sensitive and ethically-informed data collection, and finally sharper analysis and follow-through regarding research findings. ■

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Diversity Research on University Image — Research Process and Empirical Findings

by Raymond R. Liu
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Introduction

The Diversity Research Initiative (DRI) is a program funded by the Ford Foundation. It is very special not only for its research content, but also for the teamwork which the DRI requires of faculty and students. This research work also counts as a senior elective course with three credits for participating students. I was very lucky to be chosen as one of the three professors to lead a faculty-student team in the first cohort at University of Massachusetts Boston. After discussion with the director of DRI, I tentatively decided to choose "University Image and Diversity" as the team research topic. It was clear to me that this was an academic research project and that the goal of the research was to get the results published. I felt quite excited about my role as one of the DRI team leaders. At the same time, I also felt a little bit nervous about it.

Although I had been teaching an undergraduate marketing research class for quite a few years before joining the DRI research team, becoming a DRI faculty leader was a quite challenging role for me. First, when teaching a marketing research class, I use a textbook for students. In the DRI, it is a challenge for students and for me to work without a textbook. Second, although I assign research projects for students in my marketing research class, these projects focus on real business/marketing problems rather than academic research issues. Certainly, the DRI program would be brand new to the students. Third, in this special class, I am not only a teacher, but also a team member and a learner. Combining the two roles in one is new to me as well. Fourth, I have done some research on the impact of store image and country image on consumer buying behavior, but have never researched university image and diversity. Actually, no one has studied this topic before. Finally, the most challenging work is how to maximize the students' learning experience through every step of the entire research process.

In my DRI cohort, there were three teams. Besides mine, one was led by Professor Peter Kiang from the Graduate College of Education and another by

Professor Asgedet Stefanos from the College of Public and Community Service. The course format (i.e., how the class was taught), the course evaluation (i.e., how the students would be evaluated and graded for taking this course), and, of course, the learning objectives, were very different from a typical undergraduate course. In the following sections, I will discuss what I learned from the DRI research process step by step, comparing this process with my regular marketing research class.

Selecting A Research Topic

In my regular research class, I ordinarily have two ways to select class project topics. Either I pick the research topic for the entire class or students pick their own topics. Generally speaking, the research topics must be (1) related to real business problem(s); (2) feasible in terms of scope and time for the research; (3) interesting to the students (currently or potentially related to their future jobs); and (4) appropriate for applying both qualitative and quantitative research methods to the term project. Therefore, students are able to conduct an applied research project for a real business problem with the research methods they have learned from the course.

In the DRI, I was responsible for selecting the research topic. For the past few years, my own scholarly work has focused on country image and store image studies. Image has been considered as a very important strategic tool when developing marketing strategy. A unique image can be one of the most valuable business assets, and difficult to duplicate by others (Rosebloom 1983; Steenkamp and Wedel 1991; Hall 1993; Fombrun and Shanley 1990; Fombrun 1996). For example, the marketing literature has shown that store image plays a key role in customer patronage and store success (Stanley and Sewell 1976; Korgaonkar, Lund, and Price 1985), store positioning (Berry 1969), advertising strategies (Hathcote 1995), store choice (Malhotra 1983), and store loyalty (Lessig 1973).

Recently, many universities have been launching image campaigns to elevate their profile in the increasingly competitive higher education market (Cage 1994; *Marketing News*, 1997). However, they need more information about the value and uses of a university's image. Although for many years, management and marketing researchers have studied the image of profit organizations, like corporations or retail stores, there has been little attempt to study the image of a nonprofit organization such as a university (Hayes 1993; Eiseman and Caboni 1997; and Lemons 1997).

In a recent study, Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail (1994) develop a model to explain how images of one's organization shape the strength of his or her identification with the organization. According to the model, when the images are attractive, they increase the degree to which self-definitions approximate the organizational definition. Members' images of their organization are vital sources

of self-construction. Therefore, the university image, as perceived by each student, affects how they think about themselves.

A university's image can be defined as a general impression of the university. It is less like a photograph and more like an interpretive portrait. Students with different backgrounds, different experiences at the university, and different ways of thinking, believing, selecting (of exposure, comprehension, and retention), and interpreting, may not have the same impression of a university. Because the important relationship between the diversity of students and their university image has not been studied, I decided that it would be fruitful to examine the relationship between the diversity of students and the specific components, antecedents, and consequences of the university image. After the research topic was selected, the next step was to recruit students as my team members.

Recruiting Team Members

In a regular research methods course, I do not need to recruit students, because it is required for all students with a marketing concentration. The DRI course was different. It was an advanced research course taken as an elective (under MKT487 Special Topics in Marketing). Therefore, I had to reach out to students and promote this course.

Recruiting students for the faculty-student DRI class was a new and quite complicated experience for me. I needed to set the criteria for whom to recruit, decide how to encourage students to participate, and actually recruit candidates one by one. The key criteria in my mind was that student candidates must be willing to accept the challenge of doing advanced research, and have an interest in diversity. Before selling my proposal to potential student candidates, I wrote a detailed syllabus for this special class. In the syllabus, I outlined the theme and the purposes of this special course, the new research methods students would learn, and the course schedule.

The most difficult step for me in the recruiting process was to actually recruit students one by one. To maximize students' learning outcomes, I limited the candidates to those who had already taken my regular marketing research course. Unfortunately, most students who took my marketing research course were seniors and only had a few courses left to take. They were not particularly motivated to take an extra course in addition to those already required of them. They were eager to graduate, and to work in the real business world. So I had to persuade these "qualified" students how important this course could be for them. The recruiting process was very time-consuming, but I was able to get six students to join my team. In my opinion, three to four would have been better, but for my project, I recruited more students than I needed because I was afraid that some of my students might later decide to drop the course.

Setting Learning Objectives

In my regular marketing research class, the learning objectives are very basic and general. There are four major learning objectives I emphasize for the students: (1) to understand the basic concepts and process of marketing research in the context of business organizations; (2) to understand how research can be a powerful tool for understanding and analyzing the increasingly globalized marketplace business environments; (3) to improve students' ability to actually use research as a formalized means of obtaining information to be used in making business decisions; and (4) to develop students' team work and group learning skills.

For this course, besides the basic and general learning objectives listed above, we also set some specific ones relating to research issues. First, because university image is intangible, it was important to provide a relatively tangible measure to examine its components, antecedents and consequences. Second, we wanted to examine how close the general university image correlates with its components, antecedents, and consequences. Third, we would examine the relationship between the diversity of students and the specific components, antecedents, and consequences of the university image. Finally, it was critical for us to analyze the implications of our research findings.

Conducting the Research

Our research team followed the same steps for a typical research process as in my marketing research class. After establishing research objectives, we designed the research, collected and analyzed the research data, and presented the research findings.

However, my experience in conducting the DRI research was not a typical one at all. First of all, the research process was a unique learning process for students and me. Three DRI research teams met together every other week. We came from different colleges and fields (i.e., CPCS, American Studies, and Marketing). Each team not only worked and learned together within the team, but also shared experiences, built connections, and collaborated in learning and research work with other DRI teams. The multi-level interactions within and between teams made this entire DRI program very special. Each time we met, we always learned something new: different perspectives on diversity issues, different methods used for the same research step, or more efficient ways to organize a team's work.

Another great learning experience from the DRI research process is the encouraging, helping, and motivating academic atmosphere created by the students and faculty from all the three teams. When our team saw other teams

getting their work done effectively and efficiently, we tried to learn from them. They were very helpful in sharing their "secrets" and analyzing our cases. Sometimes our team did the same for other teams as well.

For me, the most exciting and interesting experience in the DRI program was related to my special role during the research process. This was the first time I had ever played a professor's role (as the instructor for this special course) and a student's role (as one of the team members/team leaders) at the same time. In my role as instructor for an advanced research course, I tried to introduce some new quantitative research methods such as Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) techniques and Structural Equations Modeling (SEM) techniques at the beginning of the course. MDS techniques are very useful in generating a perceptual map for image study, and the latter for hypothesis testing with causal relationships.

However, I was possibly too aggressive in trying to introduce SEM techniques to undergraduate students. Later in the project, we used basic statistical methods for our hypothesis testing instead of SEM. Although my original expectations regarding the SEM approach may not have been appropriate, I still consider the effort to use SEM techniques as a positive learning experience for the students

Faculty members of the first DRI cohort in Spring 1997 -- Asgedet Stefanos, Peter Kiang, Tim Sieber (Interim Project Director), and Raymond Liu (Photo on the right.)

and me. While the students might not have fully understood the SEM techniques, they now knew that SEM was useful for testing structural relationships among many inter-related variables/constructs. In the future, when they see SEM techniques used, they will not be intimidated by them. For me, I should remind myself that "the more haste, the less speed".

At the same time, after many years in a professor's seat, being a student again was quite strange. This special course made me feel very different from my regular role, but it was exciting. First, students benefited by watching how I went through the research process as a team member. Second, interactions within and among teams made my mind more open and broadened my intellectual horizons. Third, working like a student made me feel closer to the students and understand them better in all aspects. When I say "working like a student," I

(Top Left) Faculty team leader EbenWeitzman participating at a cohort meeting. (Top Right) CPCS student researchers sharing their learning. (Bottom) Faculty team leaders Asgedet Stefanos and Carolyne Arnold attending the Fall 1998 final project presentations. Cross-team and cross-cohort interactions were very much encouraged at DRI.

really mean it. When we needed to meet a deadline, we worked together in the evenings and on weekends; when we got hungry, we ordered pizza and ate together; when we felt tired mentally, we played basketball together; and when we took a break, we even joked and sang together. It was really exciting to be a student again.

Now that I am back to my traditional classroom. I have realized that my DRI experience has influenced my teaching of regular marketing research courses. First, instead of lecturing on an example in a textbook, I show students an example of how I went through a specific research project step by step. Second, spending time participating in the students' team project during their research process, instead of just waiting for students to hand in their term project at the end of each semester, is very useful for understanding what should be emphasized in the teaching process. Finally, knowing more about the diversity of students in my classes, their differences in academic background and preparations, their different experience at the university, and their different views on the learning subjects clearly contributes to more effective teaching and learning.

I made use of my DRI experience in a marketing research class that was recently involved in a research project for a local company. In order to make the learning and research process more effective, I assigned the whole class into

small teams based on the diverse background of the students. In each group, I made sure that different skills were balanced among the team members. I showed students the whole research process as well as several real marketing projects I did for local business and community organizations. Then I spent some time working with each team as a "team member," not as a professor. In this role, I found out many things I would not know if I did not work with students as a team member. One of my key findings was that very often I either underestimated or overestimated students when explaining statistical findings. As an outcome of the new learning process, one student wrote in my teaching evaluation: "I learned about data analysis. Raymond goes out of his way to be helpful." It is the most rewarding thing for me if my students say that they learned and that I was helpful to them.

Next, I will report the major findings of this research, starting from how the hypotheses were developed, and then describing how the research was designed, what research methods were used, what were the empirical findings, and, finally, discussing the implications of the research results.

Reporting the Major Findings

1. Hypothesis Development

University image, by definition, is intangible. The generally favorable or unfavorable impression of a university does not provide any information about how to improve its image. It is necessary to have a close look at the antecedents and consequences of the university image: Where does it come from? What are the channels through which students get information about the university? What are the important image components that they used as criteria for choosing the university? Furthermore, based on their experience at the university, how much do they like the university? What specifically do they like? And how likely is it that they would use word-of-mouth to enhance their positive image of the university?

According to Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail (1994), one's image of an organization is affected by the internal and external information received. For university image, the external sources in forming university image could be word-of-mouth from friends and relatives, articles or advertising from newspapers or magazines, and college guides or brochures. The best internal source would be the students' own experience at the university. We believe that those sources have direct impact on students' image of the university. Therefore, our hypotheses were:

H1: Students' internal and external information sources about a university are correlated with their image of the university.

Although, students' university image is affected by various external sources such as the university's brochure, comments in published college guides, articles or advertisements in newspapers or magazines, and word-of-mouth from friends and relatives, the internal source—their own experience—is more important than any of the external sources. That is:

H2: Students' internal source of information is more important than external sources in forming their image of the university.

To choose a university, students consider the specific components of their university impression/image as the choice criteria, such as: school program, location, faculty, staff, financial aid, tuition, diversity of students and faculty, reputation, etc. We believe that those specific components as choice criteria should be consistent with the general impression of the university. Therefore, we have:

H3: Students' university image is correlated with their university choice criteria.

Furthermore, because the internal source is critical in forming university image, students' experience with the faculty, the students, the staff, and the program at the university would reinforce their image of the university. In other words, the more students are satisfied with the faculty, the staff, and the school, the better image they have of the university. Therefore, we have:

H4: Students' university image is correlated with their satisfaction with the university

Consequently, the better image the students have for their university, the more likely they would be to use word-of-mouth to tell their friends and relatives how good their university is. Therefore, we have:

H5: Students' attitudes towards communication with outside university communities regarding studying at the university are correlated with their university image.

As discussed earlier, because of their different backgrounds and different ways of thinking, believing, selecting (of exposure, comprehension, and retention), and interpreting, students may rely on different sources in forming university image, assign different weight to different criteria for their university choice, have different satisfaction levels, and express different attitudes towards communication with outside university communities regarding studying at the university. Therefore, we have:

H6: Students with diverse backgrounds (gender, age, marital status, income, employment status, ethnic groups, and nationality) may rely on different sources in forming university image.

H7: Students with diverse backgrounds (gender, age, marital status, income, employment status, ethnic groups, and nationality) may put different weight on different criteria for their university choice.

H8: Students with diverse backgrounds (gender, age, marital status, income, employment status, ethnic groups, and nationality) may have different satisfaction levels.

H9: Students with diverse backgrounds (gender, age, marital status, income, employment status, ethnic groups, and nationality) may express different attitudes towards communication with outside university communities regarding study at the university.

2. Research Methods

In order to clarify the research questions and terms, we used exploratory research approaches, such as literature search and personal interviews; and then, we used a survey with a refined questionnaire for testing our hypotheses. The questionnaire contains the following information:

(1) general university impression/image questions,
(2) information sources from which the university image is formed,
(3) the specific components of the university image measured by a set of attributes the university may have,
(4) students' experience measured by their satisfaction with the university,
(5) students' communications with outside university communities such as other universities/colleges or friends and relatives (i.e., either negative or positive word-of-mouth communiations),and
(6) students' demographic background.

A sample (N=418) from different colleges at University of Massachusetts Boston was used for this study. The respondents profile from the sample showed a relatively representative demographic distribution of the students.

We used basic statistical methods such as Person Correlation, ANOVA, and Regression to test our hypotheses. Empirical examinations of the sampling data confirmed all of our hypotheses.

3. Implications of the Research Results

Our results and findings carry some important implications. First, because both internal and external sources affect the formation of the university image, we concluded that the university should make use of different channels to influence the public to shape its image. The mass media, word-of-mouth, and especially current students' own experience are the most important channels through which the university image is formed. Since students' school experience is mostly derived from their interactions with professors, faculty play a key role in affecting the formation of students' university image. Students are usually exposed to their professor at least once a week during the semester, and are more influenced by their professors than by administrative officers, department secretaries, librarians, and cafeteria staff. Therefore, it is important for the faculty to keep in mind that they are not only teaching a course, but also establishing the university's image in their students' minds.

Second, because the specific components of the university's image are measured by the university choice criteria, and students' satisfaction with the university and their communications with outside communities are significantly correlated with the general university image, it is very important for the university to take a closer look at how satisfied students are with their academic program, the faculty, the staff, and their schoolmates, and how likely they are to use either positive or negative word-of-mouth to communicate with outside communities regarding the university image. Examination of these issues not only provides a guideline for forming the "right" university image, they are also helpful for achieving the goals set out in the university's own mission statement.

Third, this study clearly indicates that students from different demographic backgrounds may rely on different information sources (i.e., internal or external sources) in forming university image, put different weight on the specific components of the university image, have different levels of satisfaction with the university, and have different attitudes toward using either positive or negative word-of-mouth to communicate with outside communities regarding the university image.

More specifically:

(1) female and lower-income students are most concerned about convenient and accessible location, caring faculty, student advising services, diversity of faculty and students, tuition, job placement, and reputation. If the university has the "right" image composed of these specific components, it would attract more students from similar situations.

(2) Married or older (i.e., 25 years or older) students are more satisfied with their university experience, more loyal, and more likely to use positive word-of-mouth to reinforce the university image. It may be a wise strategy for the university to put specific effort into encouraging married or older students to influence their younger schoolmates.

(3) Students of different ethnic background have particular concerns. For example, a lot of Asian American students are newer immigrants, and they are especially concerned about their job after graduation. The university job placement center could play a very important role in attracting and retaining Asian American students.

(4) Students who work part-time are particularly concerned about tuition, financial aid, the people attending the university, and the university's reputation. Financial help is also very important for those students.

(5) International students rely more on mass media or the UMB web-site if they do not have personal experience at an American university. They are also concerned about student activities and job placement, but less concerned about tuition and financial aid. Without family and friends around, they appreciate and like their schoolmates. With English as their second language, class participation is not always easy, which may affect their relationships with faculty. Printed and web-based advertisement from the university would be helpful in attracting international students, and patient, student-centered teaching pedagogy would be more effective for these students. ■

(Back row from the left) Raymond Liu and Reyes Fidalgo joined the Spring 1998 cohort for a group picture. Many DRI faculty are deeply committed to collaborative learning, and have provided support and expertise to other cohorts.

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Collaborative Process and/or Publishable Product
A Research Dilemma in the Diversity Research Initiative
One Faculty Member's Reflection

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Scenario

You, Ms./Mr. Faculty Person, have been invited to join a collaborative research effort on diversity issues focused on your own institution. Your task is to select a group of students to work in a team with you to identify a diversity question, design and carry out a research project—and write it up for distribution to a national audience concerned about diversity in today's university. Your time frame is a fifteen week semester. While you are an experienced researcher, you have never taught research to others.

You are told with emphasis that collaboration is a keynote of the enterprise. You will not be a researcher working with student assistants. Rather, the students and you working together will comprise a research team; collaborative problem solving and working together will be a vital part of the educational experience.

That is the challenge, and the problem is posed: to foster profoundly collaborative learning with a small, multi-cultural research group. The expectation is that you and your team will produce a report that can be of use to others. You are, in short, asked to create a model for student-centered diversity research.

Some context is in order here, regarding the actual institution where that challenge was issued. The institution is the University of Massachusetts at Boston. The program is the Diversity Research Initiative (DRI), a multi-year project funded by the Ford Foundation, described in the introduction to this monograph. It is crucial that our faculty-student collaborative research took place at an urban public institution of higher education where there is rich diversity, but where students live busy, commuter, multi-faceted lives and have little time to reflect on the rich human resources around them. And they have little opportunity to develop a sense of participation in a research community within the university. The DRI provides that time and opportunity.

Participating in the Diversity Research Initiative

The author—and here I step forward in my own voice—was asked to be one of the faculty team leaders at UMass Boston. I was flattered by the invitation and intrigued by the design for the program. I decided to submit a proposal that focused on evaluating the delivery of a "competency" called "Cultural Awareness,"[1] required for entering students at UMass Boston's College of Public and Community Service (CPCS). As a member of the CPCS faculty, I had taught to that competency many times. My reason for focusing on this topic is related to the CPCS Mission Statement.

According to the CPCS Mission Statement adopted in February 1998: "As an alternative educational institution, CPCS endeavors to function as an inclusive, democratic, and participatory learning community which promotes diversity, equality and social justice."[2] It seemed appropriate to me, then, to assess how well we were doing to promote a healthy diversity with entering students who were addressing the Cultural Awareness competency. That is, how effective was the entry CPCS program in helping students understand their own cultural backgrounds, and in empowering them to move toward open, trusting communication with people from other cultural streams?[3] That evaluation task, from the vantage point of some weeks prior to the semester in which it would be carried out, seemed manageable.

While my proposal was still under consideration by the selection committee, I began to talk to students I thought would be good to have on the team. The obvious pool was a class I taught the previous semester that addressed the Cultural Awareness competency. I talked to three from that group, individuals in their forties—a white woman, a Latino man and a man who identified with both sides of his African American and American Indian heritage. All agreed to participate. A fourth person who wasn't part of that class also agreed to take part, but reconsidered when he thought through his own schedule. So I invited another person who had been in the class with the other three, a white woman, to participate, and she agreed. Given my respect for, and confidence in, this group, when the DRI decided to accept my proposal, I signed on. To round out the ethnic nature of the cast, I should note that I am a white male, 65 years old, who teaches Latin American studies. None of us realized at the time just how challenging our task would be.

From the beginning, there was a creative tension in the project between the process of doing genuinely collaborative research and the goal of producing a report that would be of high quality and make an impact. That tension will structure this paper. Readers will recognize this as a central tension in all research: there are never enough resources, time, energy or insight—process factors—to achieve the ideal research product. But this classic tension takes on particular baggage when the "researcher" is a multicultural student-faculty team committed to a collaborative work style, and the product is to be made available to funders and to the wider

higher education community. The narrative and analysis of the two poles of the tension will take up at the time of the first meetings, in February of 1998.

A collaborative, multicultural process

Collaboration, as I experienced it in the research semester, came to involve two dimensions. One was the expected form of my interaction with the students in shared decision making and action. The other was the unanticipated, but welcomed, collaboration with faculty colleagues who could help shore up my weaknesses, as I may have helped with theirs.

Collaborative research within the team

When my team began meeting on Tuesday evenings, our initial notion was to carry out a comprehensive evaluation of the delivery of the Cultural Awareness competency. Our plan was to interview faculty who had taught in the program the previous semester and also to survey a sample of students who had been in the program to determine what their experience had been. After reading some

(Clockwise from Left) Student researchers Juan Rosado, Paula Knowles, Elton Jenkins, Joanne Hansen, and faculty team leader Clark Taylor.

literature on qualitative research we thought it would be valuable, not only to hold initial interviews with faculty, but also to follow the initial round with a second interview to achieve a fuller and deeper analysis of their thinking. We had a mountain of ideas and a vision for moving it, but by the time we were sorting out how to bring all this to fruition, our 14 week semester was already shrinking to 12 (the first two weeks also included some group-building exercises and an initial review of readings related to the several steps of the research process).

Collaboration called for consensus and ownership of the plan that would carry us forward. After attending the final presentations of the previous semester's DRI teams, we had all been impressed with the perils of grand schemes. At that session it was clear that groups which took on too much found themselves in trouble and heavy frustration. So we decided to pare back. I suggested we limit our study to interviewing faculty about the purposes they held for their teaching to the Cultural Awareness competency, arguing that we had a better chance of doing that limited task well. Two students held out for a design that combined qualitative research on the faculty with quantitative surveys of a sample of the students, arguing that we couldn't meaningfully evaluate the program if we didn't have any sense of student experience in the program. After discussing how difficult it would be to get a meaningful sample of ten sections of day and evening students, the two students holding out for the questionnaire agreed to put their proposal on hold for the first half of the semester to see if it would be possible later on to squeeze in at least some survey work. As the semester progressed, there was sufficient time pressure to ensure that the matter of the questionnaire never again surfaced.

At stake in this kind of collaboration is the nature and quality of roles played by faculty and students in the team effort. Students, conditioned by years of domination by teachers, all too easily defer to faculty opinion, simply because it is offered by the authority. When that happens they do not take ownership of decisions, but rather "go along to get along." But in this case we came together, as in our earlier shared learning experience, with the understanding that we would work as cooperatively as possible.

I am drawn to the thinking of Paulo Freire and his well-known distinction between "banking education" and "problem-posing/liberating education." In banking education the teacher is the source of information, which s/he dispenses by, in effect, pouring it into the empty heads of students. In problem-posing/ liberating education, on the other hand, the teacher sets a problem that relates to the experience and understanding of the students, and all work together for information and insight. In developing that distinction, Freire describes good teachers as individuals who are also students and students who are both learners and teachers:

> ***Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself (sic) taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. In this process, arguments based on "authority" are no longer valid; in order to function, authority must be on the side of freedom, not against it.***[4]

This quotation, I think, speaks volumes about the nature of collaboration in the learning process. The role of the teacher is not abrogated, but remains key to the educational activity; at the same time, the teacher is fully alive with respect for the learning of the students, which becomes the base from which students teach each other and the appointed teacher. In this setting, the teacher-student and students-teachers pursue the truth together. Authority derives from the nature of the truth itself, not from the status of the teacher.

This is the kind of collaboration I sought to use in decision-making with the team I was part of. It led us through our initial thinking about purpose, design and development of the interview set of questions and agreement on protocol. My role during this period was to introduce readings regarding the steps of research, to facilitate discussion of the readings, to introduce the concept of a timeline, with options for choice, to suggest a structure for interview questions, and to keep us reminded about tasks each one had agreed to do. At every point we debated questions that helped to clarify the timeline, interview questions and strategies for contacting and interviewing faculty. At one point when students felt some insecurity about approaching their professors for interviews, they asked me to write a memo to my faculty colleagues to describe what we were doing. I agreed and sent the memo.[5]

The cost of this approach to decision-making, however, was time. Almost before we looked up from the intense process in which we found ourselves, the semester was almost half over. We began to feel the pressures of task against time. Students stepped up to their interviews in a very responsible way. Each one had either two or three interviews to complete. I did not do any of the interviewing. They agreed, as well, to transcribe the interviews, and followed through—a very time consuming task. One student's tape recorder malfunctioned, so that interview had to be redone.

Dealing with conflict in a collaborative process

We set aside one full evening during the spring semester break week to take the first and most difficult step in developing the categories we would use in

coding the interviews. During a tense discussion, one of the students pressed a point so persistently, and without seeming to hear what others were saying, that I became impatient "and touched him on the shoulder" as I challenged him. He felt, apparently, that his integrity was being questioned and became very upset. "After a brief verbal exchange, he excused himself and went home."[6] The rest of us were devastated, and reflected together on what had happened.

In that moment, we were reminded that we were engaged in a multicultural experience within the group itself, and realized we needed to attend to that more closely. One of the students said he thought I had been culturally insensitive, without intending to be. Perhaps, he said, the fact that the challenge/critique came from the faculty person was particularly hard to take. He offered to check in with the person who walked out, to see what the issue had been from that person's perspective. That very difficult moment in itself became collaborative, as those left in the room sorted through what had happened. We concluded that we would not move forward with the coding, or with any other part of the study, until we had resolved the issue with the alienated member of the team.

This was the most difficult point in the semester for me as the faculty leader—and, I think, for the others, as well. I searched out my own sense of what had happened, asking myself and others in the group what I had done that was so problematic. Anxiously, I called the person and apologized for anything I might have done that offended him. He seemed relieved, and was ready to come back without conditions. When he returned, we plunged into the coding task with relatively little discussion about the matter. All of us were glad to have him back and there seemed to be little need to probe the matter further.

This was the point, more than any other in the semester, where collaborative process took priority over publishable research product. We "lost" two weeks of productive work in a rapidly shrinking semester, but we gained a sense of what it means to do diversity research within a multicultural group. And we gained the kind of internal cohesiveness that allowed us to work through some difficult decisions and finish the semester with a product that was acceptable to all of us.

In the aftermath of that crisis, we completed the coding of the first round of interviews and began to analyze the data. Some of the coding was done individually after working out the coding categories through extensive group discussion. Students coded and analyzed the interviews each one of them had conducted. By the time we finished, we realized we had insufficient time to do a second round of interviews and would have to draw our conclusions based on the data we had from the first interview round. Given the time pressure we were under, this decision was not hard to reach, but it is significant that we came to it by consensus.

We gained important perspective from meetings with the three teams and the project leadership in five sessions through the semester. In those sessions we were able to compare notes with other teams, and to realize in the discussion

that all were feeling time pressures. One group seemed to be a bit ahead of us in fitting the steps into the semester's plan, while the other seemed behind. But we gained a sense of being in a larger research community. Two of the discussions on diversity issues were especially helpful in gaining a larger framework for our work. One was a fascinating exchange on racial issues stemming from differences of opinion within the Africana Studies research group; another was a moving report of painful issues encountered by researchers from the College of Nursing group that related to discriminatory treatment by faculty against Asian American students.

The final in the series of project-wide meetings consisted of presentations of research findings. Although our team hadn't finished analyzing our data and refining our findings at that point, we were able to provide them in "draft" form. Each student reported on the area of the findings that he or she had taken responsibility for. I was nervous as the evening approached, and as the presentations were given. They were uneven, but on the whole the group did well, and was very enthusiastic about what they had learned through the process. Of particular note here is the powerful impression my group took from the very impressive, again painful, report from the College of Nursing group. I think that team felt very supported, as well, by the responses from students in my group.

Given the time pressures at the end of the semester, I took responsibility for writing the overall report, including a reanalysis of one section. The group discussion just prior to the final drafting had focused on the important findings of the work, so I felt confident that I understood the team's thinking at that point. In our final meeting we approved the whole report and generated a set of recommendations to the project director that were submitted in addition to the overall report.

Faculty team leader Beth Clemens facilitated the learning of qualitative data analysis among other DRI members.

In this section, I have described the collaborative multicultural process that our team experienced from my perspective. I found it stressful but, for the most part, very much enjoyed the times that we were together. The obvious exception to that was the crisis described above. But even that experience brought us together at a deeper level for the work we carried out in the difficult period toward the end of the semester.

Collaboration in the research process with faculty resource colleagues

There is another level of collaboration that I experienced in the DRI that is worthy of note: the help I received from faculty colleagues who have previously taught research courses. As a researcher who has never taught research to anyone else, I realized through the semester how much difference there is between doing research and teaching it to others. One of the other team leaders in my cohort who routinely teaches research methods, provided a number of articles on qualitative research at the beginning of the semester. I passed them along to the students, and we discussed them. At one point I provided a comparative summary of a couple of the articles to shorten and focus the discussion.

As we approached the point of coding the interview data I realized that I needed help in opening up that process for the students, and the project director referred me to a colleague who had participated in the previous semester's DRI cohort. She was particularly helpful in providing suggestions about how to teach coding. I wrote them up for the students, and we used them to find our way through the creative/scientific process that coding is.

At the time of the crisis that emerged within my team, I turned to the project director for advice and support. She provided an important perspective based on her experience of what other teams had gone through in earlier semesters, and reassured me that I was generally on the right track. During the week after the person had walked out, she came to meet with the team. At that time he still wasn't back in the process. She helped us think about what had happened and what would be helpful to do in getting us back on track.

With the end of the semester closing in, our team came to the point of analyzing the data in order to draw conclusions and make recommendations. I had proceeded on the working assumption that the students would be able to do the analysis without any particular teaching on my part. Error. In fact, I realized that not only should I have made a teaching intervention at that point, but that I actually was unsure about how to proceed. I should have anticipated the difficulty, and asked for consultation from a colleague about how to teach it. Student work was uneven: two had a fairly intuitive sense of how to proceed, one had some useful sense of it, and the other did not have a working strategy for how to approach the analysis of data. In retrospect, I realize that this was another area where collaboration would have been useful.

It is important to highlight the importance of collaboration with faculty colleagues for any program that opens opportunities for research on diversity to faculty student teams in which the faculty person is not a formal teacher of the research process. Overall my experience was very good, in part because of what I brought to it, but also because I reached out for help where I realized I needed it. The experience would have been even better, I think, if I had been partnered with a colleague mentor from the beginning. The difference between knowing how to

do something and knowing how to teach it is the key distinction here. I basically knew how to do the research steps, but didn't have a sure footing when it came to helping others think about how to take the particular steps.

Publishable product

When it came time to write the official report of our team's work together the semester had entered its endpoint crunch. The students had not only this project to wrap up—they had all their other learning activities to complete. And I was busy with all the end-of-semester work that goes with being a faculty person. So I basically wrote the final report, drawing from materials the students had given me.

Obviously, it would have taken more time to get each of the four students to write final sections of the report and to work with them on the editing, but there was another reality at play, as well. We knew from the beginning that a report was expected that could be included in the evaluation report to funders and be useful to others as well. But given our commitment to collaborative work, and the relatively short time of a semester, we didn't cover enough ground to be ready to collaborate in writing a "publishable" report.

Findings of the study

The students contributed their input to the report, but they only had a brief time to read it before we would all turn into pumpkins and disperse for the summer. Their focus was mainly on the findings and the recommendations we made. Since this was such a deep concern, it can be the featured aspect of the content aspect of this reflection on the publishable product.

As context for the study of cultural awareness leading to the findings, the group read a number of sources that were summarized in our final report; and kept returning to the question, "Diversity for what?" Is diversity simply a Good that requires no further questioning, including the ways in which some groups dominate others and, indeed, oppress others? I tried to capture the sense of the importance of the study in this paragraph, drawn from the final report (p. 7):

> ***The importance of this study, then, can be framed in its unflinching approach to the question, "Diversity for what?" "Multicultural education for what?" These, certainly, are questions not only for the CPCS faculty and students, but also for all of UMass Boston and higher education generally. Put another way the question is: should multicultural educators be satisfied with promoting mutually respectful dialogue among diverse students in the safety of the classroom—that limits focus to the people in the room? Or should they intentionally seek to***

raise sights to the harder issues of oppression rooted in the dominance of one culture over others? Given the increasingly diverse nature of U.S. society, it seems obvious that the survival of the society depends on dealing with the latter. And that means learning very intentionally how to do it well.

That framework flowed from the newly adopted CPCS mission statement, and informed the way we first began to develop the study. We wanted to know if the work of the Cultural Awareness competency was simply keyed to enabling students to get some clarity about their own culture and be able to converse more comfortably with people in a group that included a variety of sub-cultures? Or did it explore the relationships of power, of dominance and subordination of some over others.

The findings:

1) We found some diversity of faculty response to that central question on the part of faculty teaching to the Cultural Awareness competency. All nine faculty interviewed said they worked to help students understand their own culture, but the objective statement of drawing students into thoughtful multicultural communication evoked somewhat more varied responses. Of greater interest were the responses to the question of power related to culture, that is not specifically named in the competency statement itself. Three of the nine interviewed didn't mention this topic at all; two others acknowledged that it was an issue for some faculty, but that they did not feature it. The other four varied in the way they approached the issue of power, ranging from limiting the concept to the frame of the individual's power to see culture in the context of the global economy, to framing culture in the perspectives of race and class, to one who argued that the issue of power in multicultural relations should be central to the competency.

These differences, particularly on the questions related to power, provided a basis for the team's first recommendation to the faculty working with the Cultural Awareness competency: "That the concept of power represented in the unfair advantages the dominant culture has over subordinate subcultures in this society be factored into the ongoing rethinking and revision process of the Cultural Awareness competency..."

2) The second finding related to the self-perceptions of the faculty related to their own cultural moorings and openness to incorporating their own "situated learning" into their teaching. The interview question here was, "How do you define your own culture?" Two of the respondents gave brief answers; one simply that (s/he) "considers myself an American." The other said, "Well, I am, of course, who I am. (Naming her/his identity)(s/he) said we "are always sensitive to these kind of issues." Several others saw their self-understanding as an important resource for creating an atmosphere in which students could talk freely about their own cultural backgrounds. We noted a need for further study here:

One hypothesis that could be explored further is that faculty who are clearest about their own cultural background and able to be most open about it will model for students how they might approach the issue of growth around cultural issues. Those uncomfortable with their own identity and emotions may have a more difficult time in providing a liberating climate for the students...

3) A third set of findings had to do with the teaching methods used by the faculty and an assessment of variables having to do with size of class, diversity in the group, etc. Intangible "chemistry" factors about how well the group works was named as a factor by five of the nine. Make-up of the group in terms of diversity in ethnicity, race, class and gender terms was noted as a big issue for three respondents. Two others gave evidence of how a lack of diversity detracted from the classroom experience. Most of the faculty used group-building exercises to develop a sense of trust in the group. There was frustration expressed by many of the respondents regarding the quality of reading materials distributed to all of the classes, and some felt the necessity to supplement from their own stock of readings—which was encouraged by the program. The summative finding on this question was that "CPCS faculty teaching to the Cultural Awareness competency reveal themselves to be student-centered and experiential in their work with the competency. They work to create a safe, respectful and supportive, yet challenging atmosphere in their sections."

4) The final finding has to do with the Cultural Awareness competency as a catalyst for transformation. In response to the interview question, "What changes have you seen in students who have gone through the competency?" Eight of the nine respondents reported changes they had seen. One anecdote can stand for others: "One woman of color in particular came up to me almost in tears, hugged me, and said she couldn't thank me enough for giving her that article to read, that it had changed her life. She now felt she understood what was going on in her job and she planned on having a discussion with her supervisor to cover things she felt that article had raised for her." A related, unsolicited finding was the extent to which faculty reported that the work with this competency and with students had changed them. Several said how much they had learned from their students.

When the team came together to discuss the report as a whole and the findings in particular, I explained that I had used as much as I could of what they had written, and explained why I had made changes including a re-analysis of the data in one section. In our collaboration we had developed a confidence in one another, and they trusted the report I had brought together. In that framework, they took ownership of it.

As a result of our discussion we decided to write a separate memo to the director of the DRI. In it, we stressed the challenge we were asked to do in the

confines of one semester, and recommended the program be extended to two semesters. Secondly, we urged that there be more research training in the project-wide meetings—help with shaping interview questions, interviewing techniques, coding and analysis, and issues that arise when a team writes a collaborative report. In the words of one of the participants, "Resources must be available to ensure a democratic/liberating process of research!" This person suggested that a consultant be available to the groups for help with these issues.

We ended the semester as one team, with one report, and went out to dinner to celebrate what we had done.

Steps in the research leading to the publishable product

That I wrote the final report represented just one in a series of shortcuts and compromises that made our effort not a completely collaborative research project done by a multicultural team that prepared a publishable report. In this section I want to review each of the steps in the research process: selection of team members, goal setting, literature review, design, development of interview questions, interviewing, transcribing coding, analysis, and write-up—to review the shortcuts and compromises that were part of our collaborative effort. My objective here is to provide an outline that might be useful to others attempting collaborative diversity research.

First, *selecting team members*. I had the luxury of selecting the four students who, with me, would make up the research team. Given that advantage, I selected people I knew, who I would enjoy working with. I didn't know (or ask before they agreed to participate) how much research experience they had had. As we introduced ourselves, one student indicated that she had worked with a survey research effort related to government information gathering. So she had a good sense of some of the issues involved in doing research, though her experience was on the quantitative side and we were setting out to do qualitative research. But as I saw it, the fact that my group members were all mature individuals, competent in working with diversity issues, was more important than their prior research experience.

In our early activities, I took the lead in working out a time-line which set out two broad options, with tradeoffs in the amount of time we would devote to such tasks as research design, interviews, coding, etc. Having the tasks all laid out provided everyone with a reality check. As all who read this will anticipate, we fell behind as we encountered the challenge of the mid-way megasteps (interviewing, transcribing, coding), but the time-line served as a reminder, at least, of how far we had come and how *faaaaar* we had to go.

Second, *specifying the goals for the project.* There was a built in shortcut here, because I had to set out research goals even before I could recruit the students to work with. Ideally, we would have come together as a team and formed the proposal from the beginning. At the same time, it would have been unrealistic, given our time constraints and the proposal framework, to line up a team before the proposal was accepted for the DRI project. What was possible, and what we did, was to adjust and revise our goals, from the beginning and as we went along, so that we all could take joint responsibility for what we were doing.

Third, *the literature search.* In regards to this step, I proposed, and the group agreed, to a shortcut. Under the best of circumstances, a good literature search would have taken two or three weeks of our scarce time together. I proposed that we use an article entitled "A Synthesis of Scholarship in Multicultural Education" by Geneva Gay[7], which contained a fine summary of current research and an extensive bibliography. Each of us read it, and we discussed it briefly. In addition I provided students with a number of articles that were relevant to our study. This was our "literature search." As I saw it, these students had carried out literature searches for other courses and the more important use of our time together was to get on with the time-consuming research tasks that lay before us.

Fourth, *the research design.* Like the previous steps, this one took longer than anticipated. It was greatly helped by the collaboration of Lin Zhan—another faculty team leader, who shared with us several articles on qualitative research design. After we read and discussed these articles, we devised a plan which, had we followed it fully, would have provided us with rich data for our purposes. We wanted to interview all ten faculty who taught to the Cultural Awareness competency in the previous semester. We planned to transcribe, code and analyze the interviews to identify follow-up questions which we would pose in a second round of interviews. But somewhere in the midst of the transcribing we realized we would never get to the follow-up round. The design was fine in the abstract, but not realistic for the time available to us.

Fifth, *devising interview questions.* This step was guided by our central question for the research: to ascertain the purpose faculty held for teaching to the Cultural Awareness competency. We also wanted to learn whether her/his purpose was shared by the others teaching in the program. An obvious question had to do with the approach or strategy the faculty person used. A particularly useful question, as it turned out, was to ask each one how s/he named her/his own culture and how that affected her/his approach to the teaching to the competency. We asked how the person's approach to teaching the competency had changed over time, and whether the faculty person her/himself had changed as a result of this teaching.

In decisions made about these and other questions, our process was collaborative. As I saw it, without full ownership of the questions, both by individuals and by a group, the research would not have gone forward with

collaborative integrity. We received some help at this step by getting suggestions from the director of the DRI project, whose ideas proved to be very valuable. It is important to note here that there were no shortcuts taken at this step.

Sixth, *interviewing*. This step proceeded with the usual bumps that any first-time research group has to expect. Timidity barriers had to be broken through. Busy faculty were hard to pin down for interviews. Tape recorders malfunctioned in a couple of cases. But, to their credit, the students persevered remarkably well, and completed all the interviews assigned. One breakthrough early in the process came with one person's report of a successful first experience. That broke the ice. Although the interviewer was initially nervous, she found the faculty person accommodating and the experience even enjoyable. In her own words:

> ***The anticipation of asking the interview questions as best I could caused me some anxiety. I was very aware of the importance of how I asked these questions, without giving away my personal views. I was nervous about asking probe questions which was exactly the thing that got in the way of me focusing on what the interviewee was saying, and good follow up questions. I found myself struggling with wanting to participate in a conversation about the interviewee's answers. I realize there is a fine line between how you ask someone to expound, and wording a question to lean towards a specific answer. I also realized how my body language could easily encourage or discourage an answer...As time passed, I felt myself becoming more aware and as the interviewee spoke a couple of times, I was able to respond with another question.***

This revealing description of the beginning of a first interview will likely evoke memories in everyone reading this, who could report a similar set of reactions from our own experience. Subsequent reports of relief following first interviews from other members of the team gave added courage to the group and, with it, the sense they were involved in something important.

Increasing time straws were piling on the camel's back by this time, and the demands of transcribing the interviews added to them. But again, each of the four students came through. The "deal" from the beginning was that each team member would transcribe her/his interviews, but no amount of talk beforehand can adequately prepare a new researcher for the time it actually takes to get the words from the tape recorder to the page.

Seventh, *coding the interviews*. Time had become our nemesis by this point, but there was no way to hurry the conceptual challenge of learning about coding interviews and then actually doing it. Fortunately, I had consulted a colleague for guidance in how to help students learn and do coding. I took notes from that

conversation and circulated them to the group. Suggestions included a process for selecting categories, limiting the number of categories selected, color-coding responses within those categories, and developing a strategy for comparing responses across the interviews. With some anxiety about the magnitude of the challenge, we set aside an evening to code the first interview.

At this point, we hit the process crisis described above. We were not far into the discussion of selecting categories when we found ourselves embroiled over the meaning of words, which led to the rupture point and the exodus of one of the members. At that point we had to shift from task focus to group maintenance strategies, as described in the earlier section. The loss of a couple of weeks of "production" regarding the task was costly, but essential to preserve the collaborative mode we were using.

When the person returned, however, the coding process fell into focus fairly quickly. We worked through two of the interviews as a group. With some consensus about the categories we were using, we determined that the only way we would be able to complete the task in the shrinking time available to us was to have each person code the interviews s/he transcribed. This was a shortcut. We could have used some additional time in group analysis of the categories and the refinements for thinking about what fit where. But this approach allowed us to obtain reasonably usable data in time to analyze it before the end of the semester.

Eighth, *analysis of the data*. This turned out to be a bigger challenge than I had anticipated. My question-about-how-to-teach-it alarm didn't go off for this step as it had in regards to the coding process. We decided to ask each person to analyze data related to four questions: 1) faculty purpose in teaching to the competency, 2) "situated learning" of the faculty teaching in the program, 3) teaching methods used, along with variables faced with different classes, and 4) the Cultural Awareness competency as a transforming agent. I mistakenly assumed that prior experience of analyzing data would prepare them for the task. But in fact, a couple of the students had the background for doing the analysis, another had some feel for it, and the fourth just didn't have much sense of how to proceed. I hadn't had enough foresight to consider how to teach that step—one which I had taken many times in my own research.

When students brought their work for this step, I was uneasy about how to proceed. As luck would have it, the completion of their drafts coincided with the time our group was to report to the other groups. So I went to that session with some apprehension. But it turned out that similar issues surfaced in the other groups, and ours did passably well, and communicated a lot of useful information about our findings.

Ninth, *writing the final report*. I have already described the major role I took in this process. This was necessary because 1) the semester was over and the group was ready to disperse for the summer, and 2) to give the report a coherent

overview that would make it ready for export beyond our group and, indeed, to the "outside" world.

When the group approved the report, we discussed our findings at length, and agreed on some modest changes. We also defined a set of recommendations for the program director. As a result of that meeting, everyone in the group, including me, experienced a sense of closure after a stressful, but productive semester together.

Clearly ours was not a "pure" research process. There were too many shortcuts along the way. But we did produce a "publishable product"—or, if not publishable, at least one that we could feel was useful, and which brought a satisfactory closure to the semester.[8]

Conclusion

Along the way, and again at the end of the semester, the four student team members spoke enthusiastically about what they were learning and what they had learned in the process of our research together. Two of them wrote to me at the end of our experience together. According to one,

> ***I also want to thank you, personally, for giving me the opportunity to be part of this project. It has really been an experience I will never (I hope) forget or stop learning from. The people in the three groups...well, it was a blessing to meet and learn from them. And I can't really articulate how much it meant to me to be able to spend more time and share more of myself...among our whole group.***

She went on to say how much she had learned and gained from each of the others in our team.

The other spoke first about his gain from working with a diverse set of team members. He went on to talk about how the interviews with faculty were "a new and exciting experience" for him. He then spoke warmly about how the collaborative process had helped the group get past the frustrations in the analysis stage:

> ***Finally, I found transcribing the interviews a real challenge, but the analysis and report preparation rewarding. At first I did not know where we were going with the analysis. I was confident, however, that we would find a solution to our problem. I had faith that we would reach an understanding and be successful. Our problem was we had no experience in conducting such a project, not to mention analyzing our findings. Therefore, it was a touch and go situation because***

we could not put our finger on the issues. Consequently, it caused frustration among the team members. It forced us, however, to resolve the problem by working with each other and by compromising. As each of us expressed ourselves, team members began to see things from the other person's point of view.

In each of these statements there is obvious appreciation for the gain each one experienced in working with, and learning from team members. The collaborative process was real, as seen through their eyes. And this was the sense I had in working with them on a weekly basis, even though some of our discussions were tense and, in one case, explosive.

They also spoke, individually and in our discussions, about how much they were learning about the interview process and about how to do interviews. The latter point was a matter of some anxiety, understandably, before the interviews were begun. One member insisted, for a time, that the interviews be done in pairs, so the one member could give support to the other. We decided against that as a group and each of them conducted the interviews individually, and appreciated, after the fact, at least, that that had been a very valuable experience.

This emphasis on collaborative learning was the source of the priority I gave, throughout the project, to learning process over publishable product. Within that framework I gave prominence to the discussions of goals, design, interview schedule, coding and analysis. I wanted students to understand and own their decisions at each of those points, even if the steps took more proportional time than was "available" for them in the scope of one semester. Also, our collaborative framework accounts for the commitment made by the team to stop the process for a time so that one member and the rest of the team could work through issues that were making it difficult to work together.

At the same time there was no escaping the challenge to produce what one member referred to as a "cohesive report" at the end of the process—one that the team could feel good about and that effectively represented the wider project. That accounted for more reliance on the faculty leader at the end of the semester.

Throughout the semester I was aware of my own shortcomings as a faculty person who doesn't teach research methods courses. I have worked in a multicultural setting for many years, I have engaged in qualitative research, and I am a good facilitator. What I lacked was experience in helping students develop skill in some steps in the research process. At question here is whether it is important for programs like the DRI to take risks with people like me to do research on diversity within our own institutions. Based on my experience and the positive growth of the students I worked with, I will argue that it is—both on "people like me" and "diversity" grounds.

I will address the importance of doing diversity research first. Although that theme was not the primary focus of this chapter, it was the basis for my DRI application and proposal, for its implementation and for the genesis of my research team. It was my strong belief in the importance of healthy diversity in the university that led me to take on the diversity research challenge with the team. This theme was central to the findings of our study. So I speak to it, in this conclusion, as a way of drawing the threads of this project together.

Readers of this paper probably need no urging to agree that multicultural education and research about multicultural issues is a good thing. Nevertheless, as I noted in our group's final report,

> ***we gain from reminding ourselves regarding what is at stake and from reflecting on what kind of education is demanded to meet the challenges of diversity that our society faces in the years ahead. Manning Marable calls attention to research indicating that in 1990 "minorities" made up a quarter of the population. By the year 2000 they will constitute one third, and by 2026, according to projections the U.S. will have a "majority minority" population. In the future, he says, "issues of multicultural diversity will become even more central to all aspects of American life."***

Beyond the question of numbers is the question of power and, with it, the issue of hegemony of dominant cultures in this society. As educators we need to ask how the problem of dominant and subordinate cultures should be addressed, particularly when the advantages of the dominant culture result in oppressive injustice for subordinate cultures? Can we/should we avoid this question because it is difficult and controversial? Given the shifting demographics noted above, I don't think we can.

That being the case, how do we in higher education go about addressing the issues of diversity posed by our changing society? We can leave it to chance, hoping that individuals of good will take the initiative in their individual classrooms. But that is a haphazard and limited approach. The need seems obvious to research our own institutions and to become more systematic about how we address diversity issues in a way that will create a more just and therefore peaceful society.

What better way to do that research than to involve students working with faculty in teams? Here I go on to the second point, about "people like me" (with experience doing research, but who don't teach it) to lead the teams. And what better way to ensure wide diversity in that approach than to reach beyond regularly scheduled research classes—which have their disciplinary-based agendas—to

faculty like me who bring useful experience to the table, but need some support in how best to teach research focused on diversity issues?

My vision here is for colleges and universities that will take on this challenge and stay with it through the years of the demographic changes flagged above. There is much to learn, as the brief three years of the DRI at UMass Boston has made clear. It is important to build a community of faculty mentors— people skilled in teaching research—with those who do research, but need help with how to teach it. And that learning research community can appropriately be extended to include students who strengthen the institution through the praxis of research and application of their findings to their own departments and units. In this vision, then, the research community focused on diversity issues appropriately includes mentor research-teaching faculty, research-experienced faculty who are learning to teach the skills, and students. The vision is a worthy one, given the emerging demographic trends. And it points toward an answer to the question, "diversity for what?"—a university community and society beyond that welcomes and affirms diversity in a framework of social justice.

In that framework the dilemma of collaborative process versus publishable product takes its proportionate place. In a sense this dilemma is common to many research efforts, and this case study can throw light on a range of them. But the dilemma takes particular prominence in an area as experimental and important as the focus on healthy, just diversity in the university. The "experimental" points to using faculty like me, and I hope I have made the case for it. And it points to locating this research outside the usual disciplinary settings. The vision, thus, is experimental, and for many it will be provocative, even controversial.

This vision arises from the DRI at UMB. People here took a risk with the likes of me and we have learned together. I am convinced that the DRI holds promise for other institutions, as well. ■

Notes

[1] Since its inception in 1973, CPCS has offered a wholly competency-based education (CBE). Keeping with that curricular strategy, learning outcomes are specified, each with explicit criteria and standards. These factors are held constant and students are able to bring learning from a variety of sources, including their prior learning, new learning in a classroom, work site or elsewhere to be evaluated for meeting the competency. Unlike a grade-based curriculum, where time is held constant (quarter or semester) and the standards vary (A-F), under CBE the standards are held constant and time varies in that students can be evaluated when they are ready, allowing them to move at their own pace. Cultural Awareness is one of fifty competencies students need to demonstrate to gain the degree. It is required of all entering students as part of an entry program called Assessment. In this program, which is given as a course, students develop a Learning Plan that forms their individualized degree plan. Additionally they

study their own culture and practice multicultural communication with their classmates.

[2] CPCS began with a planning year in the 1972-73 academic year; its aim was to serve a diverse adult urban student population with a competency-based, interdisciplinary, field-oriented curriculum that would integrate liberal arts and career education. Its faculty comprised a diverse mix of practitioners linked to the careers the college would offer and academics. I was one of the founding faculty.

[3] This sentence provides an overview of what is called for in the Cultural Awareness competency. Students are required to name their culture and identify several characteristics of that culture. Then, drawing on written sources, they are to analyze how they have adapted to those characteristics, and how they have responded to some challenge to their culture. The final two criteria involve engaging in, and reflecting on, interaction with people who come from cultural backgrounds different from their own.

[4] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1993 (1970), p. 61.

[5] The memo is included as an attachment to the team's final project report, which can be made avaliable to readers from the CIT office.

[6] The student involved has read this paper and made many incisive comments. Regarding this section he suggested some language (in quotation marks above) which I have included here, but he also said, "This is clearly your interpretation of what happened." But he added, in conversation about the matter, that he both respected my writing about the matter and appreciated my showing him my report of this incident.

[7] Seattle, Washington, North Central Regional Educational Library's Urban Education, Program, 1994, published on the internet: http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/envrnmnt/go/leogay.htm

[8] By the time the report was ready, the semester was over and the students dispersed. I circulated our final report to all the faculty who had been interviewed and discussed it with those who were interested. I also gave it to the director of the program that deals with the Cultural Awareness competency. That fall (September 1998) the college embarked on a process to reinvent itself with a new curriculum. I was one of the most involved in that process, so had opportunity to introduce the findings of our study into the curriculum revision process. In that context the impact of the report is still hard to gauge.

[9] "Race, Difference, and the Historical Imagination," in *Peacework*, February 1998, pp. 4-8.

After the Initiative: Envisioning Diversity Research Sustainability

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> ***The constant cycle of developing innovative and effective projects, attempting to get them institutionalized or watch them go out of existence, only to be replaced by new innovative projects which may suffer the same fate, does little to encourage practitioners or those in need of services. While it is clearly important to promote innovative demonstration projects, it is equally important to make commitments to their institutionalization.*** **(Auerbach, 1994, 180-181)**

These reflections by UMass Boston colleague, Elsa Auerbach, following completion of an extraordinary university-community literacy training/empowerment project several years ago, echo hauntingly for many of us who have led externally-funded demonstration projects, particularly with significant community-building expectations. How are the lessons generated by innovative practice applied or adapted after a funding cycle concludes? How can productive methods and collaborative relationships continue after the initial investments of time, effort, dollars, and good will?

Preceding chapters in this monograph have highlighted a variety of positive outcomes emerging from UMass Boston's Diversity Research Initiative (DRI), including rich student learning, unexpected faculty growth and collaboration, and the generation of helpful institutional data and analysis. We have not collectively discussed or developed plans to sustain the DRI, however. In this concluding chapter, therefore, I explore the challenges of sustainability that now confront the DRI with two audiences in mind: 1) colleagues at UMass Boston who might directly participate in follow-up agendas emerging from the DRI; and 2) colleagues at sister institutions who might develop similar initiatives at their own campuses.

Envisioning Sustainability

To be sure, the meaning of sustainability has significance far greater than the continuation of any particular program, no matter how innovative. Driven by the ever-worsening, global ecological crisis and its especially severe impact on the developing world, a growing social movement has emerged during the past decade committed to the practice of environmental sustainability. In his call for sustainable community planning, for example, Robert Gilman writes:

> ***sustainability refers to the ability of a society, ecosystem, or any such on-going system to continue functioning into the indefinite future without being forced into decline through the exhaustion or overloading of key resources on which that system depends*** **(Gilman, 1996, 1)**

Though the political mobilization and advocacy for environmental sustainability is recent, the concept itself is ancient, as articulated by indigenous protocols of the Iroquois whose "environmental impact studies" asked what will be the consequences of one's actions for seven succeeding generations. Similarly, the Chinese poem on the face of my watch reads, "don't be seduced by the moment; fight for what will have value in a thousand years" [不爭一時爭千秋].

In the praxis of community development where systemic, ecological perspectives converge with cultural/political/economic critiques of dependency and aspirations for empowerment, sustainability represents an undeniably important programmatic or organizational goal, and is often explicitly linked to intentional strategies of capacity-building. Another UMass Boston colleague, Cheryl Gooding describes capacity-building as:

> ***a long-term learning process designed to build the capacity of individuals, organizations and communities to be effective actors in the world – whether that means meeting personal goals, fulfilling organizational mission, or developing a fully functional community.*** **(Gooding, 1995, 1)**

Or more simply, as another Chinese poem (loosely translated) recognized hundreds of years ago, if someone hungry is given a bowl of rice, s/he can eat for a day; if s/he learns how to plant rice, s/he can eat for a lifetime. [濟人碗稀粥, 教人永足食].

Regrettably, few faculty or administrators ever apply holistic, ecological perspectives or systemic community development principles to their day-to-day work in universities.[1] Rather, operating assumptions reflect and reproduce

compartmentalized, bureaucratic structures and narrow, discipline-constrained perspectives which result both in irrational, inequitable funding patterns for programs and dysfunctional commitments to students.

How else, other than absence of vision, can one account for the historic separation of student affairs from academic affairs at most universities – and particularly at urban commuter schools like UMass Boston where students' lives at the university are almost entirely defined by their academic classroom and curricular experiences. Similarly, how else can one make sense of a review process and reward structure that explicitly requires faculty to fragment their work into disjointed categories of teaching, research, and service, and thereby punishes those who view their responsibilities and apply their expertise in integrated ways throughout all aspects of their work, especially at public universities in urban environments where resources are most stretched and synergy is most needed.

To envision sustainability – for the DRI at UMass Boston or for innovative projects anywhere – inevitably challenges our institutional structures and cultures as well as our own individual training and day-to-day practice. Indeed, recent conclusions from the American Council on Education's national study of leadership and institutional transformation candidly admit that not only are there no formulas for transforming American higher education, but even those who succeed in making intentional institutional change may not have the ability or know-how to sustain their work (Eckel, Hill & Green, 1998, 9).

Sustainability, Dedication, and Dependency

A beginning step and common limitation for programs and projects seeking sustainability in universities depends on generating new sources of explicitly-dedicated funds before existing funding streams expire. This is the fundamental problematic of project-based funding that Elsa Auerbach so clearly critiques above. While external funders often seed innovative projects, they then expect the sponsoring institutions either to find alternative grant support or to assume full funding responsibility after initial demonstrations of success. But, even when universities make paper promises to do so in project proposals to external funders, the real fiscal capacities of urban public universities like UMass Boston simply do not allow new projects to be absorbed into under-resourced institutional operating budgets which have neither slack nor stability.* Thus, project directors must

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* The Ford Foundation-funded CIT faculty development seminars, which were later institutionalized and funded by UMB deans, and by the Provost Office, provides an intriguing example of sustainability which requires further study and analysis. See also Chapter 1.

invariably turn to alternative external funding sources, and resign themselves to recurring cycles of soft-money dependency and insecurity. Many dozens of professional and classified staff work under these conditions at UMass Boston through the grants and contracts received by our centers and institutes. Under this scenario, project sustainability is possible, but extremely taxing and inefficient because so much staff time must be allocated to the pursuit of new external dollars rather than to the substantive work of the project itself.

This is not to deny, however, the availability of external dollars. Each month as dozens of RFP (request for proposals) deadlines pass, I lament how many funding opportunities we miss for important projects and programs at UMass Boston simply because we lack both the will and the infrastructure to organize ourselves appropriately to submit requests. The DRI, for example, is quite sustainable for another three years through renewal funding from the Ford Foundation or through new grants from other foundations that are currently supporting higher education innovation with a focus on urban populations (Pew, Kellogg, Rockefeller, Carnegie, to name a few). Yet, given the multiple, competing commitments that each of us balances, none of the faculty associated with the DRI have been able to lead or continue it in this dedicated way.

Therefore, my focus in this chapter looks beyond the limited scenario of gaining new funds for the DRI's continuation as a free-standing initiative, and instead explores how the goals and outcomes of the DRI can be sustained institutionally with existing resources and collaborative commitments. Though I offer specific examples to illustrate possibilities at UMass Boston, I hope these reflections are also helpful to those with shared interests at sister institutions where such intentions might be built more systematically into the planning and implementation process.

Sustainability and Intentionality

I have been associated with the DRI from its inception, having accompanied Esther Kingston-Mann on the original 1995 visit to the Ford Foundation where we made a case for the project prior to her submitting the actual proposal that received funding. I facilitated one of the three "pilot" research teams during the DRI's first semester of implementation in Spring 1997, and remained connected to later teams through specific discussions about how their projects could have institutional impact. I locate my own professional work at the intersections between the fields of education and Asian American Studies, though, admittedly, my prior training as a community organizer in Boston Chinatown often leads me conceptually and pragmatically in directions that diverge from traditional academic orientations.

Recalling the DRI's formal statement of goals as well as my own internalized sense of its purpose, we designed the DRI as an educational intervention to address

the particular community-building needs and strengths of our urban commuter campus. Not knowing if the model would succeed at that time, we did not articulate or envision sustainability as one of our intentions."

Consequently, the DRI's implementation principally focused on the process and outcomes that each individual DRI team could generate. The preceding chapters in this monograph as well as the final reports of other DRI teams amply demonstrate the DRI's success in achieving its goals. But, had we also intended to achieve sustainability as an overall DRI goal, I believe we would have made some different choices, particularly in how the DRI teams themselves were selected and structured.

Although the DRI successfully tapped the rich, grass-roots motivations of individual faculty across the university through the various teams/projects it supported, it also suffered from the chronic weakness of university culture which privileges individual faculty prerogative over programmatic coherence or collective accountability. Without doubt, the individualistic orientation of faculty/university culture allows for a high level of personal investment by faculty who thoughtfully define their personal research agendas and the content/pedagogy of their courses. When faculty members' individual choices coincided with the DRI's priorities, then inspiring projects often resulted. But such outcomes were situational and ad-hoc. As a result, various institutional strategies and constituencies that could have been identified or mobilized to support the DRI's longer-term sustainability are now still relatively under-developed. Such systemic commitments require not only collective faculty engagement for sustained periods of time, but also administrative reallocations of resources that individualistically-oriented faculty typically fail to envision, due to their turf-defined, zero-sum calculus.

This institutional dynamic profoundly constrains other areas of higher education reform as well. For example, in their survey on the status of faculty professional service and academic outreach at higher education institutions in New England, UMass Boston colleagues Sharon Singleton, Cathy Burack, and Deborah Hirsch (1997a) found that the service or outreach mission of most institutions was simply left to the ad-hoc initiative of individual faculty. Perhaps alternative dynamics of institutional culture will emerge when models of collective accountability now being employed to transform faculty role and reward structures take root and prove more effective (Hiley, Kennedy & Robbins, 1997). But until more holistic, ecological visions actually lead higher education and shift the pervasive, individualistic orientation of university culture, strategies to sustain an intervention like the DRI will depend largely on either embedding its work within larger priorities of the institution or in forging long-term collaborations with other units that will share resources to achieve commonly desired outcomes. These are the possibilities I turn to now.

Embedding DRI Work Within the Institution's Strategic Commitments

The heart of the DRI model worth sustaining – based both on its original intent and its actual impact during four semesters of implementation – is the creation of supportive learning communities that engage urban, commuter students and faculty more fully in the life and future of their own university by conducting focused research about relevant diversity issues. By adapting the DRI model to articulate with major curricular priorities of the campus and collegiate units, it may be possible to sustain the work of the DRI in modest but long-term ways.

Possibility #1: Facilitating General Education Reform

In her lead essay for the special issue of *Change* magazine focusing on the responsibility of higher education to rebuild civic life, our esteemed UMass Boston colleague, Zelda Gamson highlighted the impact of learner-centered pedagogical practices that she and Arthur Chickering have long advocated for undergraduate education reform, including:

> ***the use of learning communities, collaborative learning, and reflective experiential projects; perspective-taking and intercultural communication; cooperation among students and between students and faculty; respect for the diversity of student capacities and learning styles; indeed, most of the seven principles of good practice in undergraduate education*** **(Gamson, 1997, 13).**

These same innovative teaching/learning practices are central features of the emerging model for general education at UMass Boston. When measured by person-hours spent in committee meetings and governance bodies or by the amount of discretionary dollars allocated, general education reform has represented the university's most important curricular priority during the past five years. This investment will continue as a strategic commitment throughout the institution's next five-year planning cycle as well.

The revision of general education requirements at our urban, public, commuter campus has particularly emphasized the importance of providing our "non-traditional" students with shared learning experiences through the design of both first-year and capstone seminars. While much of the actual development and implementation of these new courses has been left for departments and individual faculty to determine, an obvious possibility is to use the strengths of the DRI team model as a vehicle 1) to structure students' shared learning, their direct engagement in campus issues, and their socialization to methods of research, and 2) to integrate diversity as a pedagogical and content issue into ordinary classroom process

(what Professor Lin Zhan has called "the hidden curriculum of the DRI"). As a first-year seminar, the team-building and collaborative learning process might take precedence over the actual research outcomes (as Clark Taylor found to be necessary in Chapter 5). On the other hand, a capstone seminar dedicated to substantive diversity research would enable students to apply their institutional savvy and prior learning of research methods from their majors to a relevant issue around which they could have significant impact (as Raymond Liu demonstrated in Chapter 4). What better way to culminate and share one's undergraduate work with others?

Because of the strategic importance of general education reform, significant institutional resources have already been allocated to support faculty who pilot first-year seminars. Capstone course development will receive similar backing. DRI commitments – translated into the forms of first-year seminars or capstone courses – can potentially gain long-term support if individual faculty and their departments articulate with the institution's strategic general education priority.

Possibility #2: Supporting College-Based Curriculum Revision

Curriculum revision is an essential, ongoing process that departments and colleges must undertake in order to remain credible in their fields and relevant to the changing needs of students and their environments. Particularly in professional fields such as nursing, law, education, or management where substantial external requirements for certification or licensure intersect with internal values about what is important to teach/learn, the curriculum must be tightly organized into coherent, coordinated pathways of courses and competencies which sequentially build on prior learning and prepare for continued progress. Not only is there limited flexibility in the curricular system, but there is also little slack in either the quantity or quality of time that working-class, commuter students can realistically allocate to school. Thus, every course counts, and the coordination between courses and learning outcomes over time becomes crucial in order to maximize the educational and developmental impact of everyone's efforts.

Although faculty have primary responsibility for revising the curriculum of a college or academic unit, they can not do so as individuals in isolation. Indeed, to design and implement a coherent curriculum, faculty must reveal, critique, brainstorm, and coordinate together about what, why, and how they are teaching. Furthermore, assessing and revising the curriculum is not effective unless students (and former students or alumni) also participate in the process. Finally, a major thrust of curriculum revision must consider issues of diversity. With this in mind, I offer examples of DRI projects that point to the possibilities of a DRI approach to curriculum revision.

For example, the exemplary DRI-sponsored study, "Learning Needs of Asian American Students in the College of Nursing," (described by Lin Zhan in Chapter

2) uncovered several urgent issues regarding issues of race, culture, and language for students in the College of Nursing which were then referenced and pursued by a second College of Nursing faculty-student DRI team focusing on "Development of a Multicultural Undergraduate Nursing Curriculum Checklist" in conjunction with a college-wide process of curriculum revision.

Similarly, during the DRI's first semester, a team of faculty and students from the College of Public & Community Service (CPCS) conducted the project, "Students' Learning Experiences and Educational Environment at CPCS" to examine how CPCS students, faculty, and staff make meaning of the diversity-related competencies required in their curriculum. One year later, amidst a re-invention of the mission and curriculum of CPCS, another CPCS DRI team conducted "Research Regarding Faculty Perception of Purpose of the "Cultural Awareness" Competency in light of CPCS' new Mission Statement". Though they did not closely coordinate their work with each other, these DRI teams in CPCS and Nursing enhanced the important work of curriculum revision in their respective colleges both by contributing significant data that would otherwise not be available and by bringing important student constituencies into the process who would otherwise have much less voice or role.

Other DRI studies such as "The Impact of Africana Studies on Students of Non-African Descent" and my own team's "Analyzing the Impact of Asian American Studies in the Curriculum: Making Meaning Over Time in the Lives of Alumni" also provide examples in which important data from students and alumni can be gathered through DRI work and then used to inform the curriculum assessment and revision process for departments and programs as well as for collegiate units.

DRI faculty team leaders Amy Rex Smith and Marion E. Winfrey, and one of their student researchers Herby Jean. The team developed a multicultural checklist for their undergraduate nursing curriculum.

As these examples show, not only must every college and academic unit sustain commitments to regularly evaluate and revise their curricula, but often the questions that compel curricular change actually focus on diversity issues. How are multicultural and global realities being addressed through the curriculum? How is the curriculum experienced by diverse students? The College of Management, for example, is not only re-thinking its curriculum in order to more effectively prepare students to work with diverse populations in global markets, but faculty are also daily struggling with issues of race, language, and culture in their relationships to rapidly growing student enrollments of immigrant and international students. Given that 35% of its graduating students in 1999 were Asian and Asian American, the need for sustained student-faculty collaborative research in the College of Management comparable to the DRI project, "Learning Needs of Asian American Students in the College of Nursing," seems, for example, like a valuable DRI commitment to design.

Forging Long-Term Collaborations to Share Resources and Sustain Outcomes

An additional set of possibilities for DRI sustainability respectfully recognizes that many individuals and units with existing institutional support at UMass Boston have goals, methods, and desired outcomes that directly match or closely complement those of the DRI itself, even if they do not represent strategically-defined priorities of the campus as a whole. By crafting creative, intentional, long-term arrangements with those particular units, it becomes possible for the DRI's commitments to continue, even if the original free-standing form of the DRI demonstration project does not. I offer five illustrations of what could be developed.

Possibility #3: Connecting Student Affairs and Academic Affairs

Two years ago, UMass Boston initiated a restructuring of its campus organizational chart to integrate the goals and work of Student Affairs more directly with those of Academic Affairs. Unlike residential campuses where the Student Affairs unit is far more responsible for the reality of students' quality of life and healthy development within the institution, the locus of student life and growth at a commuter campus like UMass Boston occurs primarily in the classroom where it is mediated, for both better and worse, by the pedagogical and curricular choices of faculty.

Due to their historic separation and stratification, the professional staff and administrators from Student Affairs are largely disconnected from the faculty who function institutionally within the domain of Academic Affairs. As a result, Student Affairs personnel rarely engage in collaborative teaching, learning, and

research activities with either faculty or students. It is equally unusual for most faculty to make ongoing commitments as advisors, mentors, or advocates for student clubs and other student life or enrollment service activities. There is no reward system within the institutional structure and culture for faculty to do so, much in the same way that institutional disincentives discourage faculty involvement externally in community organizing and development efforts.

The consciously designed re-alignment of Student Affairs with Academic Affairs at UMass Boston, and at many other colleges and universities in recent years, however, creates exciting possibilities for the DRI that we have only begun to explore. Imagine, for example, a structure and process supported each year by Student Affairs to convene groups of students, either through existing organizational networks on campus or alternatively through direct grass-roots organizing and self-selection based on interests, who would meet during the fall semester to identify important issues defined by students that need institutional attention. Imagine further that a core of highly skilled, committed faculty were directly involved not only with assisting students to identify those important issues and needs, but then to co-construct DRI-inspired action research projects designed to analyze the roots and implications of those student-defined issues, and develop institutional intervention during the spring semester[3].

With curricular mechanisms to provide course credit for students and a modest level of funding support for faculty course releases, this Student Affairs-sponsored program could sustain virtually every important feature of the DRI model while actually strengthening the student-defined nature of the research questions and thereby enhancing the likelihood that team projects would have real institutional impact on issues that matter. In the process, it would also establish a compelling and powerful innovation in its own right that successfully transforms the relationship of Student Affairs with Academic Affairs. The value-added potential of this possibility is enormous.

Possibility #4: Faculty Development and the Teaching of Research Methods

Every semester, as Tim Sieber notes in Chapter 3, various departments, usually with their own particular disciplinary approaches and agendas from the social sciences and professional fields, offer a dozen or more courses defined by name or content as "research methods". The faculty who teach these courses as part of their normal – and, therefore, sustainable – workload represent an important potential constituency to connect with the DRI.

The experience of one of those faculty, Raymond Liu, described in Chapter 4, reveals not only how experienced research faculty with selected students can conduct significant, sophisticated research, but also how engagement with the

Faculty team leader Raymond Liu facilitating a discussion on his team's research.

DRI model of collaborative diversity research enables faculty to participate as learners themselves, both within one's own team and through the collaborative cross-team meetings/seminars. This experience of faculty learning, in turn, influences how one teaches research methods courses in the future, as Raymond's chapter so clearly explains.

In retrospect, had we been thinking more intentionally about how to sustain the DRI, we might have devoted one semester during DRI implementation to identify and convene a core of those faculty across the campus who regularly teach research methods and are also interested in diversity issues. Even if only one out of the group felt sufficiently inspired and skilled to restructure her/his ongoing teaching of research methods based on the DRI model, the long-term effect of such a sustained commitment would be well worth the initial investment.

Perhaps we can still envision a semester-long faculty seminar convened by the Center for Improvement of Teaching (CIT) – the primary campus-wide unit responsible for faculty development in relation to teaching – that would focus on the DRI model of teaching/learning research methods. Such an arrangement would be institutionally easy to facilitate because the CIT is also the institutional sponsor of the DRI.

Furthermore, in connecting the faculty development aspect of the DRI with the institutional role of CIT, it might also be possible to propose such a faculty seminar in conjunction with a menu of options to support faculty development that is part of the implementation of UMass Boston's post-tenure review policy. Like many universities now adopting post-tenure review policies, significant resources for faculty professional development are now being allocated as part of contractual obligations. The opportunity to link collaborative teaching of diversity research to faculty development resources provided through post-tenure review commitments is an emerging, long-term possibility to consider.

Possibility #5: Engaging Institutional Research

Each day, our Office of Institutional Research collects and analyzes data relevant to diversity research. But our office, like those at other universities, is

over-worked, under-staffed, and driven by impossible deadlines of our senior administrators who, themselves, are responding to equally impossible demands of their own multiple constituencies, ranging from internal governance bodies and the university system's Board of Trustees to the legislature and state Board of Higher Education to federal funders and accreditation agencies and even to legal counsel seeking to defend the university's diversity policies and practices from legal attacks by well-financed ideologues.

If we imagine moving beyond a reactive mode of operation, what if the Institutional Research (IR) staff could meet with DRI facilitators to co-construct diversity research questions that would be most useful to the institution for each coming year? What if an IR staff could lead a DRI team and offer students credit or if an IR-focused DRI team could be supported through a modest allocation from the IR budget to provide the team's faculty facilitator with a course release?

If these collaborations could deepen over time, one could also envision how DRI student-faculty teams could benefit from having direct access to the wealth of available IR data. IR staff could also greatly benefit from having DRI teams available to conduct focus groups or other methods of qualitative research that would give greater meaning to the statistical data that IR typically collects and is limited by. For example, IR data may show a disparity by race in student retention or in students' passing rates of the university's Writing Proficiency requirement, but the data reveal nothing about *why* the disparity exists. Qualitative research is often too labor-intensive for IR staff to carry out, and yet, is urgently needed to discover deeper meaning in important data.

Although establishing such a collaborative relationship would challenge some assumptions about bureaucratic boundary lines, I offer it as a possibility that would not only contribute more helpful institutional research, but would also involve IR staff more fully as participants with students and faculty in learning communities – a relationship, I argue, that more directly connects them to the university's core mission and greatest reward.

Possibility #6: Enclave Resources and Ethnic Studies

In scanning the institutional landscape for sites with potential collaborative power for DRI work, it is helpful to draw on the research about faculty professional service by Singleton, Burack, and Hirsch (1997b) and by another esteemed UMass Boston colleague, the late Ernest Lynton (1995). They identify marginalization as an underlying reality in both the institutional arrangements and internalized mindsets of faculty who make strong commitments to outreach and professional service activities.

Building on this theme, Singleton and colleagues adapt the concept of "enclaves" to capture the ways in which service-oriented units or faculty networks

of "the usual suspects" are able to thrive, while remaining outside the mainstream of their institutions – much in the way that ethnic enclaves provide members with real physical space, a shared language, culture, and socioeconomic support system that serve as alternatives to the mainstream institutions and communities of the dominant culture and society. Singleton, et al, further suggest that the very marginalization of those "service enclaves" may actually be what enables their work to be creative and flexible. If those commitments are institutionalized, are they then assimilated into the dominant institutional culture and thereby stripped of their "on the edge" identities or can they bring perspectives from the margins into the institutional center while retaining their integrity and authenticity?

Interestingly, both realities have been true for ethnic studies programs in the United States. At UMass Boston, as I have written elsewhere, we have worked to maintain a revolutionary praxis for Asian American Studies while also gaining institutional stability (Kiang, 1998; 1997b). Ethnic studies programs are themselves often marginalized by institutional racism in universities. Nevertheless, their historical role and fundamental contributions have been to transform academic culture – how the curriculum is defined and represented, the nature of scholarship, the practice and methods of research, expectations for pedagogy, the empowerment of diverse students, and the engagement with communities.

The recent blue-ribbon report by the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities (1999), for example, sounds an urgent, millennial call for public higher education institutions to become "engaged" by responding to the diverse demographic profiles of students, by connecting students' learning with real world research and practice, and by allocating resources to address the critical issues of communities. Ironically, these are exactly the same powerful commitments that ethnic studies programs have sustained and institutionalized within universities over the past thirty years.

Though they are rarely embraced or recognized by leaders and funders involved with higher education innovation, I argue here, as I have in *Change* with other UMass colleagues (Arches, et al, 1997), that Ethnic Studies programs exemplify how various strands of current best practice in higher education reform – from service-learning and faculty professional outreach to institutional engagement and diversity research – can be integrated holistically and sustained meaningfully, together with core commitments to inspirational teaching, critical scholarship, and curricular transformation.

In this light, the example of my own DRI project further illustrates how collaboration with ethnic studies programs and personnel can be sustaining for DRI work.

Possibility #7: Asian American Studies Commitments for One DRI Team

In the pilot DRI project I facilitated in Spring 1997, our research analyzed how alumni view the meaning and impact of their learning experiences in Asian American Studies courses at UMass Boston. As the director of our Asian American Studies program, I have gathered overwhelmingly positive student feedback every semester for the past twelve years. But we have lacked systematic information about the impact of our courses over time in the continuing lives of our alumni. After contacting directors of other Asian American Studies programs nationally, I discovered that no one else had reliable retrospective or longitudinal data about curricular impact either.

Through an independent study course format, my seven-member DRI team collectively agreed to share and learn together, to connect with former Asian American Studies students who have graduated, and to gain experience with qualitative research methods in order to assess the impact of our courses over time. Though we articulated these goals in relation to our DRI team's specific project, they also represented broader commitments held by students and faculty in the Asian American Studies program, independent of the DRI.[4]

Ensuring this larger programmatic and curricular commitment was intentional in my DRI pilot project so that work (and learning) could continue beyond the limitations of the one-semester independent study itself. Given how difficult it is to build an affirming learning community with students while training them in research methods and also conducting meaningful research during the same single semester, I wrote in my final DRI project report, "I am sure that these tensions between team-building, methods training, and data collection/analysis will challenge every other DRI team" (Kiang, 1997a, 5). This proved to be true for nearly every team across all four semesters of the DRI's implementation.

Students in my DRI team also recognized for themselves the importance and the responsibility to sustain the work beyond one semester for the sake of our own continued research and program development as well as to support

Team members Naoki Koyama and Yen Phi Mach at their DRI cohort meeting

comparable efforts at other institutions. Stacy, a management major of Cape Verdean heritage, for example, asserted: "Maybe other universities will follow in our foot steps and pay close attention to our research... These findings are a way for professors, deans, department heads, students and President to know what needs to be done and how to do it." After much struggle with the process, her DRI project teammate Yen, a sociology major and ethnic Chinese refugee from Vietnam, reflected:

> ***at different times during this research project, I have wondered about "Why are we taking so many little steps in this gathering of data? It's such a waste of time!" I thought we could just do the interview and pick out lines or quotes that are important to answering the questions we were asking. But now that we are at the end of the semester, I realize that all those steps were important because we are not the only people working with the data, and that people from other semesters might be looking at these also [as the research continues]. I feel now that I was somewhat selfish before; I didn't think about who else might benefit from the hard work we have done to find out all this information.***

Since then, our DRI project has evolved and continued in several ways. To sustain impact, we:

- used findings from the DRI study to provide important data-driven rationales for collegiate-based and campus-wide Asian American Studies program proposals that successfully gained (unanimous) approval from UMass Boston's internal governance bodies in Spring 1999.
- incorporated DRI project findings in an article about Asian American Studies curriculum development that I wrote for Transformations, the refereed journal of the New Jersey Project on Curriculum Transformation (Kiang, 1998).
- posted a summary of our DRI project findings, at the invitation of the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U), on their DiversityWeb site, www.inform.umd.edu/diversityweb/ Leadersguide/DREI/kiang.html.

In terms of sustaining learning, we:

- used the DRI work as a pilot study to gain additional grant funding ($6,900) from the National Association of Student

Personnel Administrators (NASPA), enabling us to extend our research about the long-term impact of Asian American Studies courses through June 1999 (Kiang, 1999).

- continued our outreach to alumni using the DRI-generated research instruments (interview protocols and survey questions) in conjunction with final research projects for four students in my Summer 1998 introductory Asian American Studies course and 25 students in the same course during Spring 1999.

Although these more recent iterations of the alumni research project do not exactly replicate the independent study learning environment of my original DRI team, the original goals are still adaptable and achievable because they match with broader commitments of our Asian American Studies program to produce those same outcomes. Multiple possibilities for sustainability exist, but, as illustrated in my own case, they are only realizable with planning and intentionality.

Doing Something After

After analyzing how sustainable partnerships were designed between communities and educational institutions through its National Community Development Program, the National Society for Experiential Education concluded in a recent report:

> ***Emerging out of this program experience is a tentative hypothesis which posits that when individuals and organizations, as self-conscious partners, claim their own voice; listen carefully to other voices; build trust and respect in relationships; discover common ground; declare shared goals; and assess their impacts with rigor, they become more able to create sustainable partnerships.*** **(Sigmon, 1999, 12)**

The language and elements of their findings match well with many of the reflections shared in previous chapters of this monograph about doing diversity research. Issues of voice, trust, shared goals, and rigorous assessment represent some of the landmarks we have also collectively noted through the experiences of 13 teams over four semesters – *making the road as we walk*[5].

Nevertheless, our own road has not yet led to sustainability, and I personally regret that we did not refine our maps or extend our visions sufficiently as we walked through two years of DRI project implementation to engage more secure

structures or resources to sustain the DRI's commitments beyond those of individual projects and team members. It is not too late, though, either for our own work at UMass Boston, or for sister institutions with interests in developing comparable initiatives. That is, after all, one underlying motive for producing this monograph. Sustainability can appear in many forms, including the internalization of lessons learned and the conscious dissemination of those lessons to others who go on to develop more effective and inspiring practices at other sites.

In her interview about the long-term impact of Asian American Studies courses from my own DRI team's research project, a Chinese American alumna – now the director of a major Asian American community organization – realized:

> ***where I am now, what I do, a lot of it was the seeds planted when I started taking these courses... I think the way that you can tell if a program is good is that if the people who leave the program.... if they really.... if they do something with it after.***

In choosing to reflect on issues of sustainability in this chapter, I am struggling with the very same question now about the DRI. What will we do with it after? The above examples offer some possibilities, but surely we can collectively construct many more here and elsewhere. ■

Moving on -- student researchers Yen Phi Mach and Yuko Matsubara graduated from UMB in Spring 1999.

Joined by Peter Kiang (Second from the Right) and his son Jazz Kiang (First from the Right) the fourth and final DRI cohort celebrated their hard work and presented their findings on December 16, 1998. The event also marked the completion of the DRI's collaborative research efforts.

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the support of the Ford Foundation, the Center for Improvement of Teaching at UMass Boston, and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators for providing funding support that enabled me to write this chapter. I am especially grateful to UMass Boston colleagues who contributed to the development of the DRI monograph, including Esther Kingston-Mann, Vivian Lee, Jianrong Liu, Raymond Liu, Yen Phi Mach, Lauren Redmond, Jeff Scott, Tim Sieber, Clark Taylor, and Lin Zhan. Most importantly, I thank the many Asian American Studies students and alumni who helped to build, sustain, extend, and inspire the work of my own DRI team.

Notes

[1] For models and resources related to the role of higher education in fostering environmental sustainability, see: http://www.2nature.org/programs/profiles.nsf.

[2] We also did not find diversity research projects functioning at any other schools from which we could learn at that time. Now (five years later), in contrast, the DiversityWeb site of the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) features an entire section of resources and models devoted to campus-based diversity research, though examples of student-faculty collaboration are still unusual. See: www.inform.umd.edu/diversityweb/Priorities/DREI.html.

[3] Completed DRI projects such as "UMass Boston and the Hispanic Student Population," "UMB Faculty's Knowledge and Perceptions Around Students with Disabilities," and "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Students: Experiences with the University of Massachusetts Boston" hint at the types of student-centered projects which could be readily designed with Student Affairs support.

[4] The mission statement of the Asian American Studies program reads, in part:

> *As a model of democratic educational practice, the Asian American Studies program is committed to:*
>
> • *enabling students of all backgrounds to develop essential critical thinking skills as well as sensibilities for community-building, community service, and social responsibility;*
>
> • *preparing students to function fully and comfortably in a multiracial, multicultural society;*
>
> • *integrating instruction in the classroom with practices of mentoring and role modeling outside of the classroom to address the holistic, social and academic needs of students.*

[5] Another innovative university-community commitment – the Center for Immigrant & Refugee Community Leadership and Empowerment (CIRCLE) which I co-founded at UMass Boston in 1994 used this metaphor – translated from the work of writers/activists in Latin America and associated with the writing of organizer/educator Myles Horton – to describe its profoundly generative and collectively-defined process of development(Arches, 1997). The difficulties and disappointments CIRCLE has faced in trying to sustain its extraordinary work have greatly motivated me to write about the challenge of sustainability for the DRI.

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Section II

Lessons of the DRI: Unforeseen Challenges, Benefits, and Goals Achieved

A List of DRI Projects
(Spring, 1997 - Fall, 1998)

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Lessons of the DRI

by Esther Kingston-Mann

Unforeseen Challenges

Students in the early DRI cohorts believed that more emphasis should have been given to methodological and logistical issues in the larger seminar meetings, and in later cohorts this concern was attended to.

Some students were critical of their faculty team leaders for a lack of consistent and strong leadership and guidance; there were also faculty who criticized some students for impatience with the collaborative process and in some cases, for irresponsible behavior.

Given the complexity of the project, time constraints, and the academic traditions of faculty autonomy, project staff could sometimes provide assistance, but could not always intervene or exert oversight to the extent that may have been required.

Time constraints and the lack of precedents for the DRI experiment posed so many challenges to all DRI participants that relatively little time was devoted to the question of how to sustain the project once the grant expired. (See essay by Peter Kiang.)

Although none of the faculty or administrators consulted beforehand predicted that time constraints would be a problem, most DRI participants agreed that one semester was too short a time to adequately complete the tasks of research design, to learn research methods, carry out investigations, analyze data and produce a research report. As the project evolved, the staff began advising DRI teams, and especially faculty team leaders, to set priorities carefully and be prepared to make trade-offs which preserved key goals if time pressures became too great. The DRI staff learned much from the suggestions of each cohort, and applied this knowledge to the next. By the time we thought we had "figured out" how to deal with some of the problems listed above, the grant period had ended.

Unforeseen Benefits (not set out in the DRI grant proposal)

Faculty collaboration across teams and cohorts, yielding many new interdepartmental and intercollegiate relationships. Faculty development: enhanced understanding of collaborative process and of teaching research methods, learning

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research insights from students, and acquiring new qualitative and quantitative research techniques.

Goals Achieved

Collaborative, student/faculty research teams focused a) on the assessment of significant institutional issues that bear on questions of diversity and inclusion at UMB, and b) on learning the appropriate methods of inquiry and data required for the study of particular topics

A number of students became "hooked on research," and opened themselves to new understandings of diversity. According to one student, "There are issues, situations and views that have emerged in our work together that are either new to me, or were made more vivid." Another "considered going on with what I have started, to assist and bring light to sensitive and important issues that face our community."

Seminars linked diverse students and faculty across disciplines, programs and colleges; in conversations about the ethics and broader significance of diversity research; teams learned from each other in many areas; built friendships and alliances.

Students participants presented research findings to seminar colleagues; produced research reports. Their findings were disseminated in the DRI newsletter. Some presented their research at off-campus conferences, others to department chairs and faculty in the unit they were researching; one team's research contributed to the emergence of an Asian American studies program on campus.

The Diversity Research Initiative (DRI) Team Projects

DRI Projects are funded by the Ford Foundation and sponsored by the Center for the Improvement of Teaching (CIT), University of Massachusetts Boston.

Spring, 1997

Analyzing the Impact of Asian American Studies in the Curriculum: Making Meaning Over Time in the Lives of Alumni
Faculty Team Leader: Peter Kiang (Graduate College of Education/Asian American Studies)
Students: Amy Emura, Albert Koo, Naoki Koyama, Hyun Jung Lee, Yen Phi Mach, Yuko Matsubara, and Stacy Pires.

Students' Experience and Diversity, Satisfaction, and University Image
Faculty Team Leader: Raymond Liu (Marketing Research, College of Management)
Students: Christopher P. Delaney, Martha S. Driscoll, Tsuneichiro Nomura, Kevin M. Waite, Chia-Shing Wu, and Tatyana Yablonovskaya.

Diversity Research Initiative: Students' Learning Experiences & Educational Environment at the College of Public and Community Service (CPCS)
Faculty Team Leader: Asgedet Stefanos (General Center, College of Public and Community Service)
Students: Watchen Barker, Noel Curtin, Debbie Gray, Trish Leelman, Lila Pronczuk, Robert Scott, and Ginnie Soucy.

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Fall, 1997

Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Students: Experiences with the University of Massachusetts Boston
Faculty Team Leader: Beth Clemens (Gerontology Institute)
Students: Rachel Ammorrosano, Tiffany Gouch, Leila Kohler, and D.K. Richardson.

UMass Boston and the Hispanic Student Population
Faculty Team Leader: Reyes Fidalgo (Hispanic Studies) and Elsa Casas (University Advising Center)
Students: Nancy Castillo, Abigail Christopher, Kim Mann, and Samantha Martinez.

Student's Cross Cultural Conflicts and Their Management in University Settings
Faculty Team Leader: Eben Weitzman (Dispute Resolution, College of Public and Community Service)
Students: Antoinette Caraglia, Christina Lopes, and Helene Lucien.

Spring, 1998

Cultural Diversity and Social Justice: Research Regarding Faculty Perception of Purpose of the "Cultural Awareness" Competency in Light of CPCS' New Mission Statement
Faculty Team Leader: Clark Taylor (General Center, College of Public and Community Service)
Students: Joanne Hansen, Paula Knowles, Elton Jenkins, and Juan Rosado.

Diversity Research Initiative: Learning Needs of Asian American Students in the College of Nursing
Faculty Team Leader: Lin Zhan and William H. Fite (College of Nursing)
Students: Jian Rong Liu, Jeanette Livello, Candice Taggart, and Victoria Strakaluse.

The Impact of Africana Studies on Students of Non-African Descent
Faculty Team Leader: Tony Van Der Meer (Africana Studies)
Students: Leonard X. Brown, Justin Daley, Lauren Craig Redmond, and Cheryl Sumesar.

The Role of Family in Forming Beliefs About Diversity
Faculty Team Leader: Carolyne Arnold (Human Services, College of Public and Community Service)
Students: Susan Bailey, Holly Decker, Brenda Eliopoulos, Mary E. Fields, Donna Finneran, Mary Garcia, José Perez, and Miki Yoshida.

UMB Faculty's Knowledge and Perceptions around Students with Disabilities
Faculty Team Leader: Alison Gottlieb (Gerontology Institute)
Students: Rudy Garcia, Chris Hart, Carmella Roy Kearsley, Michelle Pirog, Lori Sautter, and Betty Washington.

Diversity Research Initiative: Music as an Expression of Cultural Diversity
Faculty Team Leader: David Patterson (Music)
Students: Sharon Crumrine, Christine Gozick, Patric McCormack, and Joseph Phillips.

Development of a Multicultural Undergraduate Nursing Curriculum Checklist
Faculty Team Leaders: Amy Rex Smith and Marion E. Winfrey (College of Nursing)
Students: Jean E. Brutus, Herby J. Jean, Ingrid Rush, and Hanh Tran.

Section III

Sample Reports from DRI's Collaborative Research Teams

UMB Faculty's Knowledge and Perceptions around Students with Disabilities

Development of a Multicultural Undergraduate Nursing Curriculum Checklist

Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Students: Experiences with the University of Massachusetts Boston

Diversity Research Initiative: Students' Learning Experiences and Educational Environment at CPCS

Analyzing the Impact of Asian American Studies in the Curriculum: Making Meaning Over Time in the Lives of Alumni

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UMB Faculty's Knowledge and Perceptions around Students with Disabilities

by Alison Gottlieb (Faculty Team Leader, Gerontology Institute), Rudy Garcia, Chris Hart, Carmella Roy Kearsley, Michelle Pirog, Lori Sautter, Betty Washington.

Introduction

Individuals with disabilities have historically been under-represented in post-secondary educational programs at a ratio of 1: 3.5, although their rate of enrollment is increasing (Baggett, 1994). Because of this under-representation, many faculty are unfamiliar with individuals with disabilities and related issues. Major disabilities rights legislation passed during the past 25 years has established a set of laws and administrative rules that ensure basic rights to individuals with disabilities, including receiving post-secondary education. The most important, from the perspective of a publicly funded university, is Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112). This law guarantees that "no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall be excluded from participation in a program solely by reason of the disability."

Public universities have developed services and guidelines to ensure the rights of students with disabilities. The extent to which faculty are aware of these services and procedures and the extent to which they are equipped to accommodate students presenting with a variety of disabilities is influenced by many factors, however. Factors affecting faculty attitudes and knowledge around disability issues include the number and variety of students in their classes, training they have received on and off campus, and experiences with individuals with disabilities outside the university community.

To maximize the ability of UMB to welcome and appropriately accommodate students with disabilities, it is important to understand the extent of faculty knowledge, attitudes, and experiences with students with disabilities (SWD). This information will assist in identifying specific actions to be addressed that would support faculty in their work with students. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to examine the experiences with students with disabilities among UMB faculty, to explore faculty attitudes and comfort level around students with disabilities, and to understand the extent of UMB faculty's familiarity with disability legislation and campus disability services.

Literature review

A review of research studies investigating faculty familiarity with disability issues and attitudes towards students with disabilities suggests mixed findings.

There have been a number of studies investigating faculty attitudes towards students with disabilities and their willingness to provide accommodations. Most report generally positive attitudes among faculty (Aksamit, Morris, & Leuenberger, 1987; Fichten, Goodrick, Tagalakis, Amsel, & Libman, 1990). Moreover, faculty generally reported willingness to accommodate students with disabilities (McCarthy & Campbell, 1993; Nelson, Dodd, Smith, 1990). In general, studies have reported that professors are less positive about having students with disabilities in their own departments than in the university elsewhere. However, professors who have not taught students with disabilities are more likely to express discomfort with SWD (Fichten, Amsel, Bourdon, & Creti, 1988). Female faculty, professors in education or social sciences, and those with more experience with SWD report more positive attitudes (Fonosch & Schwab, 1981).

When attitudes towards different types of disabilities are investigated, students with physical (orthopedic) disabilities are viewed as least serious. Blindness is viewed as the most serious disability among those who have worked with SWD, while deafness and cerebral palsy are viewed as more serious among faculty with limited experiences with SWD (Fichten, Amsel, Bourdon, & Creti, 1988).

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requires publicly funded universities to make "reasonable accommodations" for students with disabilities. While open to interpretation, the law requires faculty to provide classroom accommodations and make modifications to policies (such as testing, assignment delivery, etc.) so long as they do not fundamentally alter the nature of the course (Kinkaid, 1995). On the other hand, students have responsibilities under the law before the university is obliged to provide accommodations: students must self-identify and provide documentation of their disabilities and request the specific accommodations they need in a timely manner (Frank & Wade, 1993). Thus, to appropriately meet the needs of students with disabilities, faculty require an understanding of their own and their students rights.

In general, however, studies report that faculty typically have very limited knowledge of disabilities legislation, especially with the provisions of Section 504 which is most pertinent since it targets institutions receiving federal funding (Campus Chronicle, 1992; Thompson, Bethea, & Turner, 1997; Jaschik, 1993). Studies have also pointed to the need for faculty training and faculty desire for information about working with SWD (Houck, Asselin, Troutman, & Arrington, 1992; McCarthy & Campbell, 1993; Nelson, Dodd, & Smith, 1990).

The research questions addressed in this study of UMB faculty followed the lines of questioning of previous campus research. Specifically, we hoped to determine the extent of UMB faculty experience and knowledge of SWD and disability legislation. We also hoped to determine areas where the university might better support faculty around working with SWD.

Methodology

The primary research method used for this study was a campus-wide, mailed survey of UMB faculty. A questionnaire was developed that incorporated areas of inquiry from previous surveys on faculty experiences with students with disabilities in college settings. The specific questions were developed by the team of student researchers, but, in many cases, were modeled after questions used in previous studies. The questionnaire was pilot-tested with a number of campus faculty and modified to reflect their corrections and concerns before being distributed to all 704 full and part-time faculty via an inter-office mailing.

The questionnaire contained four main sections that addressed the following topics: 1) faculty's experiences with SWD; 2) Faculty knowledge around disability legislation and services; 3) faculty opinions concerning SWD and accommodations; and 4) faculty demographic information. (See Appendix A for the questionnaire instrument). There were a number of open-ended questions providing opportunity for explanation and comment. Faculty were also asked if they were willing to participate in an interview to further explore these issues.

An interview guide was developed for follow-up interviews with interested faculty. The purpose of these interviews was to gain faculty perspectives on ways the university might better serve SWD and support faculty in their efforts to work with SWD (see Appendix B for the interview guide). Although a third of the respondents indicated a willingness to participate in an interview, the research team was unable to conduct more than a few interviews within the time-frame of the study, in part due to difficulty contacting faculty.

Questionnaire data was entered into the statistical program, SPSS. Frequencies were run to provide descriptive information. In addition, chi square tests were conducted to look at associations between a number of variables. The purpose of the bi-variate analyses was to explore the association between the extent of faculty experiences with SWD and their opinions of SWD and knowledge of disability legislation. Qualitative comments were compiled by question and analyzed to elicit themes that would help explain some of the quantitative findings. Interview comments were also reviewed in light of these other findings.

Findings

Sample description. About 15% of the faculty (n=126) completed the survey questionnaire. Respondents represented all five colleges at the University, with the majority from the college of Arts and Sciences. About half the respondents taught only undergraduate students, (48%) with most of the others teaching both graduate and undergraduate students (40%). Over half the respondents were 50 or older, and 85% were at least 40. While the gender distribution among campus faculty is 60% male, respondents to our survey were more heavily represented by females.

Experiences with students with disabilities. Most of the respondents (91%) reported having taught at least one student with disabilities. Typically, faculty reported teaching one or more students with learning disabilities (83%) with 72% reporting two or more students. Students with physical/motor disabilities was next most frequent (60%), followed by hearing impairment (43%), psychological disability (42%), and visual impairment (40%). As a crude measure of overall level of experience with students with disabilities, a summary variable was created that summed the number of students reported across disabilities, with a range of 0 to 12 (since "other" was a response choice). This measure was then subdivided into "level of exposure" as follows: a score of 0 - 2 was labeled "low," 3 - 6 "moderate," and 7 - 12 "high." (About 50% of the respondents fell in the moderate category, with 25% in each of the other two categories.) [1]

Previous research has measured attitudes of faculty or non-disabled students towards SWD with one of several scales developed for this purpose (Antonak, 1982; Gething, 1991; Makas, 1985; Yucker, 1965). These scales, however, measure attitudes toward "the disabled" as a group and have been reported to reflect social desirability bias and, thus not good indicators of actual behaviors towards people with disabilities. Rather than assess faculty attitudes towards students with disabilities, our research team believed that measuring level of comfort with SWD would be more appropriate. Team members believed that, in many instances, faculty may feel uncomfortable when faced with the prospect of a student with disabilities in their classroom, in most cases because of lack of previous experience. Moreover, faculty comfort has been measured in previous research (Fichten, Amsel, Bourdon, & Creti, 1988).

To assess faculty comfort with SWD, two questions were asked. The first: "Recalling the students with disabilities you have worked with, how would you rate your overall level of comfort?" used a four point Likert scale. Ninety percent of the respondents reported being somewhat to very comfortable.[2]

Faculty were also asked to indicate the type of disability with which they felt most and least comfortable from among a list of six disability types. Many faculty were uncomfortable answering this question (18% did not answer the question, and some commented that they were comfortable with all disabilities or that it was

the severity of disability that was more an issue than the type). We had anticipated faculty selecting one disability among the list for most and least comfortable. Some did this, while others selected a number of disabilities. Nonetheless, when frequencies were examined a clear pattern emerged. Faculty were most likely to indicate comfort with physical/motor disabilities (32%) and to indicate discomfort with psychological disabilities (45%). For visual impairments, hearing impairments, and learning disabilities, faculty were as likely to express comfort as discomfort.

To examine factors that might explain faculty comfort and discomfort, chi square analyses were conducted comparing faculty exposure and level of comfort associated with a particular disability. For example, whether or not faculty reported working with a student with physical disabilities was compared with the frequency with which they indicated they were "most comfortable" with physical disabilities. (This was only calculated for categories with sufficient frequencies). Chi square analysis indicated an association between working with student(s) with physical disabilities and reporting comfort with that disability (^{2}=6.2; df=1; p<.05). There was no association however between experience with students with psychological disabilities and reporting "most discomfort" (^{2}=0.3; df=1; p>.05). Thus it appears that while exposure to students with physical disabilities may result in greater faculty comfort with these types of disabilities, faculty are equally likely to report discomfort with psychological disabilities regardless of whether or not they have had contact with such students through their teaching experiences.

Faculty were also asked to rate the challenges they confronted in working with SWD overall and the impact they believed working with SWD had on their teaching methods for all students. Nearly half the respondents reported that working with SWD was moderately challenging while another 30% found this to be somewhat challenging. It should be noted that "challenges," in many instances, were viewed as positive challenges, as indicated through comments provided by several respondents. Nearly half (45%) of the respondents reported that working with SWD had a moderate to great impact on their overall teaching style.

Chi square tests indicated a significant association between level of exposure to SWD (low, moderate, high) and ratings of challenge and impact. Faculty with greater exposure to SWD reported more challenges than did those with minimal exposure (^{2}=30.1, df=6; p<.001) and greater impact on their teaching (^{2}=13.0, df=6; p<.05).

Faculty were encouraged to explain how their teaching had been impacted by working with SWD. Over half the respondents provided comments or examples that provided insight into the typically positive ways professors' responses to working with SWD had increased their sensitivity to students in general. Examples include:

> ***"Having students with disabilities in my classroom has sensitized me to dimensions of classroom work such as sound levels, visual***

contact, note taking and the conviction that I need to be more explicit about addressing these concerns since they are potential obstacles to learning for all students."

"I now allow all students extra time on exams. Few actually need it, but all seem more relaxed and focused because they are not under time pressure."

"Learning to accommodate learning disabled students has helped me to become more deliberate and methodical in all aspects of teaching."

Faculty were asked to describe specific accommodations they made for the SWD they had found most challenging to work with. Typically, faculty mentioned modifications to testing - providing more time, options for presenting answers orally, having students take tests at home or with extended time at the Disability Center. Assignments might be given in advance, detailed outlines provided, and use of computers maximized. Communication might be enhanced via e-mail, use of interpreters, one-to-one meetings, and out-of-class help. Faculty also mentioned restating questions, reading aloud what was on the board, speaking more slowly, and providing special handouts. More individualized, creative accommodations were described as well. For example, one faculty described adapting a wheelchair lab bench. Another made field trip accommodations based on communication with family and paired the student, who had multiple disabilities, with a volunteer partner with experience in the field trip site.

Disability legislation and services. The large majority of faculty respondents reported the campus disabilities services as somewhat to very helpful as a resource to them. However, 14% of those who had taught students with disabilities were unfamiliar with campus disability services. Three quarters of the faculty respondents indicated they preferred being informed of a student's need for educational accommodations by both the student and Disability services, although a number of faculty commented that disclosure should be done in a way most comfortable to the student . Other faculty commented that they would prefer learning of the need for accommodations at the beginning of the semester, before exams and papers were due.

It should be recalled, however, that federal legislation specifies it is the role of the student to inform professors of their disability, with documentation, and to request specific accommodations needed in a timely manner. Findings from this study suggest that faculty may not be aware of legislative guidelines, and may be most comfortable with practices recently used by UMB (a letter from the Disability Services) along with student disclosure.

In fact, it is evident that UMB faculty have limited knowledge of disabilities legislation. Fewer than 10% reported being very familiar with legislation, while over 60% were mostly or not at all familiar with legislation. The reasons for this lack of familiarity may be associated with the lack of formal faculty training. Only 35% of the faculty had ever attended disability awareness training at UMB or elsewhere. When asked if they would attend an awareness training on disability issues, however, only 50% indicated a willingness to attend. Faculty comments suggested that time and scheduling were a major deterrent. Others suggested that if the training was practical - providing strategies on how to work with specific disabilities (e.g., psychological and learning disabilities), they would be interested.

Chi square analyses tested associations between these variables and the level of faculty experience with SWD. Those with more experience with SWD were more likely to report the campus disability services as helpful, while those with little experience were more likely to be unfamiliar with campus services (^{2}=25.0, df=6; p<.001). Familiarity with disability legislation was also associated with level of experience with SWD (^{2}=16.2, df=6; p<.05). Faculty with greater experience with SWD were also more likely to have attended disability training (^{2}=19.6, df=2; p<.001). There was a trend for those with the greatest experience with SWD to indicate greater likelihood of attending future disability trainings than for faculty with low to moderate experience (^{2}=12.2, df=6; p=.06). Finally, and not surprisingly, faculty who reported having attended disability training indicated being more familiar with disability legislation (^{2}=15.7, df=3; p<.001).

Other studies have found gender and age differences among faculty in terms of their experiences with SWD (Aksamit, Morris, Leuenberger, 1987; Fonosch & Schwab, 1981). To investigate if these differences might be evident among UMB faculty, chi square analyses were conducted to examine associations between some of the study variables and gender or age (<40, 40-49; 50+). Not surprisingly, younger faculty reported the least experience with SWD (^{2}=10.6, df=4; p<.05). Age was not associated with perceptions of challenge or impact on teaching associated with SWD, nor with experience with legislation or trainings.

It should be recalled that female faculty responded to the survey questionnaire at twice the rate of male faculty in relation to their representation on campus. Female faculty were no different than males in terms of their reported level of experience with SWD. Women faculty, however, reported greater challenges associated with SWD (^{2}=10.9, df=3; p<.05) and greater impact on their teaching methods (^{2}=9.0, df=3; p<.05) than did male faculty. Female faculty were also more likely to report familiarity with disability legislation (^{2}=14.5, df=3; p<.01), with males most likely to report being not at all familiar. There was also a trend for females to report having attended training, though there were no gender differences in willingness to attend future trains. These findings correspond to findings from other studies.

Implications

This student-produced study of faculty experiences, knowledge and opinions around students with disabilities at the University of Massachusetts Boston is significant, first because of the high level of interest it engendered in UMB faculty. The survey questionnaire was thought-provoking and demanded reflection by respondents, as well as effort to return it by inter-office mail. Despite these factors that might be expected to reduce response rate, a full 15% of the full and part-time faculty completed and returned the questionnaire. Many wrote extensive comments and a third were willing to be interviewed further (returning identifying information with what would otherwise have been an anonymous survey). While results from the questionnaire clearly represent a self-selected group who were motivated to respond to the survey and, thus, cannot be generalized to the entire UMB faculty, they do provide useful information about the faculty as a whole (full-time and part-time; from all 5 colleges; undergraduate and graduate; and from those who have and have not worked with students with disabilities).

In addition, the survey generated campus controversy, with one faculty member expressing a strong opinion (in the form of an editorial commentary in the campus media) that the study and questionnaire was inappropriate. Another faculty member was moved to write a strong rebuttal to the first opinion in a subsequent issue of the campus paper. These faculty responses further support the importance of addressing disability issues on campus.

Findings from our survey of UMB faculty are comparable to other reports in the literature. Faculty report a moderate level of experience with students with disabilities, highest for learning disabilities (which are the most prevalent disability in the population at large), followed by physical disabilities, with the least experience with sensory impairments and psychological disabilities. It is likely that faculty report greater experience with physical disabilities because they are highly visible, while psychological disabilities may not be apparent, especially if not disclosed by the student. Of note, the UMB respondents reported experience with SWD of all types at a higher rate than reported in a study of UMass Amherst faculty (*Campus Chronicle*, 1992). This difference may reflect a greater number of SWD on the UMB campus, since findings for both studies were based on similar survey methods.

For faculty who have worked with more (and greater variety of) students with disabilities, experiences appear to be largely positive. While faculty with more experience reported greater challenges, these challenges appear to be manageable and welcome - resulting in greater sensitivity to SWD and to the individual needs of all students. Most of these faculty (who have taught three or more SWD) are aware of campus disability services and often use these resources to accommodate SWD who may need to take exams in a less pressured environment. Faculty also make a variety of accommodations in terms of their class presentations,

communication with students, assignments, and testing. The study findings lend support to the important contribution students with disabilities make to the campus learning environment. The more faculty are presented with students with disabilities in their classrooms, the greater the impact (in positive ways) on their overall teaching strategies.

It is of note that faculty with greater experience with SWD are more likely to report knowledge of disability legislation, training, and willingness to attend future training. It is not known whether faculty who are confronted with more SWD seek out information and training, or whether some faculty have made more effort to acquaint themselves about these issues and also to seek out students with disabilities. Some faculty commented on seeking out SWD, and some members of our research team (who themselves have disabilities) reported that they have been advised to take courses with certain faculty members who are known to be particularly attuned to SWD. It would seem that the university should encourage and support faculty with less experience with SWD to learn more about disability issues and strategies for working with such students.

Faculty are less familiar with specifics of disability regulations, especially in terms of understanding procedures for learning of a student with disabilities and needed accommodations. The majority expressed a preference to be informed of a student's disability from disability services, either as a first resource or, more typically, by both the student and disability services. Moreover, the majority of faculty reported being unfamiliar with disability legislation and have not attended disability training. While not addressed with a specific question, these findings suggest that faculty are not aware that students with disabilities who believe they need accommodations are expected to request these services directly of faculty in a timely manner, according to legislative mandate. This study did not survey students, but it is likely that many students are not fully aware of their responsibilities under the law or may not feel comfortable approaching faculty, disclosing their disability, and requesting accommodations.

These findings suggest increased need for information on federal and state regulations for faculty. Since most faculty indicated they are not likely to attend disability training, it would be important for faculty to receive a pamphlet outlining key regulations and procedures with regard to accommodating SWD. This pamphlet should also be distributed to all students (not just those who present themselves to the Disability Center). The information might also be available on the UMB webpage.

While most UMB faculty appear to be comfortable with SWD, overall, they seem to be least comfortable with students with psychological disabilities. Moreover, many reported discomfort or lack of knowledge around working with students with some types of learning disabilities. Comments associated with the question on disability training suggest that faculty may be more willing to attend

training if it provided practical strategies on how to address particular learning challenges - as opposed to a more general sensitivity training.

Despite the lack of interest to attend disability training, our findings, along with findings from other studies (Thompson, Bethea, & Turner, 1997) indicate a general lack of knowledge of disability legislation and need for training. A variety of on-going, creative, proactive approaches should be used to ensure that faculty and students receive this information. Aside from a brochure and targeted workshops on specific disabilities, trainings should be offered through the Learning Center and Center for Improvement of Teaching. These trainings should be dynamic, practical, and offered at a variety of times to meet diverse schedules. Incoming faculty should be provided an orientation session on disability legislation and campus resources and procedures.

UMB should also adapt the Handbook on Disability produced at the UMass Amherst campus. This handbook, targeted to the entire university community, outlines the civil rights issues and legislation, provides suggestions for working with SWD, describes university, community, state, and federal resources and includes a number of readings aimed at increasing awareness around disability experiences. By modifying the sections on university and community resources, this handbook could be made available, with only moderate effort, to the UMB community.

In conclusion, the research team hopes that this study serves as a catalyst for greater efforts by UMB to inform all members of the university community of the civil rights, state and federal laws, university procedures, and university and wider resources that will support faculty, students with disabilities and others in how to maximize the learning potential of SWD and enhance the learning environment for all students.

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Notes

1. We recognize that this is a crude measure of the number of students for a number of reasons. The response choices were "one" or "two or more." In some instances, faculty may have indicated more than one disability for the same student, e.g., deaf and blind.

2. It should be noted that response option were ordered with positive choices first, thus increasing the likelihood of social desirability bias among respondents.

Development of a Multicultural Undergraduate Nursing Curriculum Checklist

by Amy Rex-Smith and Marion E. Winfrey
Faculty Team Leaders
College of Nursing

The Diversity Research Initiative (DRI) results from a Ford Foundation Grant in which groups of students and faculty, in collaboration, research diversity issues. Given this charge, Dr. Amy Rex-Smith and Dr. Marion E. Winfrey of the College of Nursing (CN), University of Massachusetts Boston developed research project that asked the central question "Can a comprehensive tool be developed which will inform and monitor our new nursing curriculum for multiculturalism?"

This project originated because the College of Nursing is developing a new curriculum to begin in the Fall semester 2000. Informally, over the past several years we have heard and discussed the disaffection minority students have in relation to the nursing program. Last year, one of the Diversity Research Initiatives focused on Asian students in our nursing program, and raised serious issues about inclusion and diversity. If the College of Nursing can take positive actions to prevent making the same mistakes with our new curriculum, a tool must be found that will monitor curriculum for multiculturalism. Such monitoring in and of itself is useful, defining what is and what is not multiculturalism in our nursing program.

Drs. Rex-Smith and Winfrey saw the DRI collaborative forum as an effective means of advancing a combined student/faculty perspective on the curriculum. Traditionally, faculty "own" the curriculum. However, the premise of the project was that it is the student who experiences the curriculum; therefore it is their input that must be sought. Accordingly, four students were recruited for this research. Two of the four students were Haitian men just beginning the nursing program, Herby Jean and Jean Brutus. The other students were a Vietnamese sophomore student taking her first clinical nursing course Hanh Tran, and an African American woman, Ingrid Rush, who graduated from the College of Nursing shortly after this project was completed.

The research process was initiated by canvassing the perspectives and experiences of our student colleagues. This is well described in the words of Ingrid Rush, taken from her final oral report to the combined DRI groups on December 16, 1998: "Once the team was formed, the bonding process began. Relationships were established between students as well as between students and faculty. This was achieved through students sharing their personal experiences

with the team, at the encouragement of the faculty. Cohesion was also established from these shared experiences."

Students were then assigned to review the multicultural literature that existed in the standard electronic data base in nursing, the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL). Two students searched for articles on learning styles and diversity, and two students searched for artifices on multicultural content in nursing curricula. Likewise faculty gathered information on cultural assessment tools. Information obtained from the articles was used to develop definitions of terms such as culture, cultural group, ethnicity, ethnocentrism, class, and nursing curriculum. A definition of diversity was also developed and included country of origin, philosophical perspectives, gender, age, culture, societal view, ethnic group, class, and multiplicity of experience. Please see Appendix One for the copy of the Definition list. Admittedly this was not an exhaustive review, but it was sufficient in depth and breadth, and coupled with student perspectives, it was deemed to be adequate.

The next step was to create a tool to be used in evaluating the content of the nursing curricula based on students' personal experiences in the College of Nursing, literature review, and the consensus definitions. As we looked at the content, we found that there was a need to assess how students were engaged in learning and how the CN faculty's attitudes toward diverse students affected learning. Very clearly we determined that these were two separate entities that did not necessarily occur as parallel trajectories. In order to obtain a complete assessment tool, therefore, we decided to add pedagogy (teaching methods) and contextuality (attitude expressed by faculty that communicates respect) to the tool.

After the second revision of the tool, it was ready to be tested. Focus groups were employed to further inform tool contents. This procedure meant that the tool would have both relevance and validity. Through discussion based on the diversity of the students in the CN program, and our team resources, focus groups were limited to three. Consensus was achieved on the following three groups:

(1) a group of Asian (Vietnamese) students, which served to extend the research from last year's Diversity Research Initiative of Drs. Fite and Zhan;

(2) a group of Haitian students; and

(3) a group of senior students of various backgrounds.

Both groups I and 2 were sophomore students who would have been enrolled in at least one clinical rotation and attended some nursing courses, as opposed to freshman who would have done neither, could have provided little input to the evaluation. The two groups were run separately because there was a concern that it would be difficult for a diverse group to express their views and issues openly. The senior group was intended to be diverse in order to have representation of all students in the CN. Since seniors have completed most of the nursing curricula

and clinical rotations, they were the students with most experience with our curriculum and faculty. We hoped that openness would not be an issue in this group, since senior students have spent a great deal of time together in the classroom and in clinical groups. Hopefully they would have reached a certain level of comfort with one another. Students eligible for the focus group were identified from CN class rosters. Then the faculty members on the team drafted a letter inviting the selected students to participate. The letter informed the students of the purpose of the project and the focus groups. A copy of the content section of the draft tool was included in the letter to allow the student to consider what points they wanted to make at the focus group session. The letter emphasized that the student participants and their comments would remain anonymous and that no faculty would attend the sessions. Lunch was offered as an incentive to participate. After the letters were sent, our student colleagues made follow-up calls to each potential participant to confirm their attendance. At the focus group sessions, each team member followed a script developed by our DRI team. Forty-five minute sessions were run in the Science Building, away from the College of Nursing, in order to foster a feeling of comfort and openness. All three groups gave the DRI team permission for the sessions to be tape-recorded, and team members made sure that every student had the opportunity to speak. Hanh Tran led an Asian group of 4 students, with Herby Jean as her recorder; Herby Jean led a Haitian group of 7 students, with Hanh Tran as his recorder. Ingrid Rush led a senior group of 5 students, with Jean Brutus as the recorder. The senior group was composed of 1 male and 4 female students. Four of the students were from either Africa, Haiti or Jamaica, and considered themselves to be of one culture. One student considered herself to be Haitian-American (bi-cultural).

In determining the composition of these focus groups, we achieved diversity in terms of culture, race and ethnicity as well as a range of student experience within the curriculum -from novice to senior. This first semester senior group was, and was intended to be, multicultural unlike the Haitian and Vietnamese focus groups.

Faculty input was also obtained. Each full time CN faculty member was given a complete draft tool and was asked to evaluate the tool, giving input to content, pedagogy, and contextuality. Only five faculty members (out of twenty-five, 20%) returned the evaluation and their data was compared and pooled with the assessment of the team and the assessment of the focus groups to give us our final " Multicultural Assessment Tool for the Nursing Curriculum".

Evaluation of Research Project

During this process the CN DRI team learned a great deal concerning the needs of both faculty and students in relation to multicultural ism and the nursing curriculum. Nursing students want and deserve a consistent voice in the nursing curriculum. Importantly, this voice is not aimed at the content of the curriculum.

Faculty and students seem to agree that multicultural content for the most part exists and is acceptable in the curriculum. The area of greatest dissonance concerns contextuality, or how the content is relayed to students and student learning interactions. Here faculty had little or no comment but students had a great deal to say. Students readily note that they felt cast aside as individuals and as human beings with worth and value - in essence, summarily dismissed as persons. Dismissed because of color, dismissed because of language, dismissed because their learning style and abilities differ from those of the mainstream. Quite powerfully, this assessment of CN undergraduate/faculty interaction resonated throughout all focus groups. It seems that there is a palpable disconnect between those teaching and those learning when the emphasis is on content rather than context.

Given the emergence of this disconnect, one must ask why. Is it because faculty remain unaware that this is occurring? Is it that faculty are experts in their clinical field rather than also in the field of education and pedagogy? Is it that the system of rewards in the University remains one of tenure for scholarship over teaching, thereby penalizing those who spend time and energy developing the craft of teaching at the expense of publishing? Is it that students want more from faculty than they can possibly give - to be patient and tolerant and understanding of every student in every situation? To be willing to constantly modify and readjust for each student's needs? Do students expect too much attention to their individual needs in at a large institution like UMass Boston? Are students as realistically willing to become patient, tolerant, and understanding of faculty/students in an institution where they come just for a class and leave? With drive through education how can real growth and change occur with both students and faculty when there is little or no tolerance for exchange and interaction because "I have to get to work" or "I have to get home"?

Clearly, professional schools must attend to content. In nursing, for example, content mastery means the difference between life and death for patients, which is a teaching imperative that cannot be ignored. Further, that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts licenses individuals as being safe to practice as registered nurses places a tremendous burden on faculty. The burden for faculty remains, therefore, to dispense and promote knowledge and critical thinking while simultaneously evaluating its attainment in both the classroom and clinical settings. But this is not enough. The mission of the University, the College, and our own sense of humanity further demands that the context of teaching should be attended to as well. This will not be easy. First, faculty must understand what the context of teaching means. Next, there must be incorporation of learning activities into courses that reflect this type of teaching. Finally, the seamless incorporation of contextuality into one's teaching should be monitored, evaluated, and rewarded. This would mean a change in what is evaluated for merit pay, promotion, and tenure by the College of Nursing *and* the University. It is unrealistic to believe that attention to contextuality by a faculty member will occur because even though

it is praised by students and seen as improving student outcomes, as if it is considered a negative and detriment to remaining at the University where such successes were achieved.

Responsibility for improving contextuality in the nursing curriculum rests with students as well as with faculty and the university. Students must be patient. Students must be tolerant of the learner that is now the faculty. Students cannot expect change overnight; indeed change may not occur until current students have graduated. Students deserve to know that real progress is being made and the "Multicultural Nursing Curriculum Checklist" can serve as a barometer of success. Students should realize, however, that attention to contextuality does not equal passing the course. That would be a professional betrayal of the public trust that licenses the College of Nursing.

Conclusion

This project accomplished a great deal. Students and faculty worked together as colleagues on a potentially volatile and personally relevant problem. Student colleagues handled the problem with respect and professionalism, displaying leadership properties that will serve them well in the future. Focus group participants know that their concerns were solicited, heard, respected, and acted upon. A relevant and realistic tool was developed that although requiring further refinement, speaks to real issues and real concerns for an existing group of students as they experience the nursing curriculum -- *their* nursing curriculum. Finally, the faculty, who seem disconnected from the major issues voiced by students remain the most affected by this research, and yet the least involved. This has something to do with the nature of the collaborative structure, but strategies for faculty recognition of the disconnect and supportive re-education will be the next challenge. This is a daunting task that will require dialogue on all levels of the University and College of Nursing, but it is a task that must be accomplished. Accomplished because everyone has a right to be respected, students and faculty alike.

"Multicultural Nursing Curriculum Checklist"

(Final Draft)

Developed by the College of Nursing DRI Team

The following major categories have specific -indicators that should be readily evident in the undergraduate nursing curricula of the College of Nursing when course syllabi, handouts, and learning assignments and activities are reviewed:

Content: what is taught is what is valued

- health issues of sub cultures - for example, diabetes and predisposition
- diseases shared by all persons
- what predisposes certain groups to pathology
- treatment effectiveness across groups
- adherence based upon values and beliefs
- presentation of non-western treatments
- health assessment methods applicable to all individuals
- how to effectively interact with non English speaking patient (hx and PE)
- presenting health care issues pertaining to families/age groups
- strategies for effectively caring for individuals across the lifespan
- religious and spiritual beliefs

Pedagogy: ways in which the student is engaged in learning

- practice test questions as a part of class
- reading level of tests and books evaluated for appropriateness
- present medical terminology before presenting major diseases and health issues
- provide strategy for test taking
- critical thinking practice
- limit chapters tested on an exam
- appropriately pace learning activities - for both the generic and RN student
- provide an outline so that the student can listen to teacher during class
- need to go to the health care agencies to see what the profession is really all about
- shadow a nurse
- pair up students ESL with non-ESL and minority with non-minority to do an assignment together to foster interaction and to learn about each other (deliberate pairing)
- use language students can understand on written examinations
- give students a choice between two day a week class presentation or one day a week class presentation

(Checklist Continued.)

Contextuality: Attitude or perspective expressed by a faculty that communicates the spectrum of respect

- when a student asks a question they are acknowledged and not ignored
- statements such as "Are you clear" singles out and embarrasses a student
- exhibits a willingness to work with ESL students rather than dismissing them with a phrase such as: "It's obvious that your language difficulty is not going to allow you to succeed so why don't you drop out of the nursing program, take more English classes, then come back and lets see if you can make it."
- acknowledgment of how age and personal life situations can affect academic performance
- exhibit willingness to work with students on an issue or a problem on a one to one basis
- demonstrates an understanding of the diversity of student situations
- available
- approachable
- maintains confidentiality
- operates from an additive model not a deficit model in working with students from diverse class backgrounds
- makes appropriate referrals for family and social problems experienced by students

12/14/98ARS&MEW

A Study of Lesbian, Gay, and Bi-Sexual Students' Experiences of the University of Massachusetts Boston: Comments on Research Methods and Process

by Elizabeth Clemens, Faculty Team Leader
Gerontology Institute

This exploratory qualitative study addressed the following research question: What is the nature of LGB students' experiences in the classroom and in the social environment at UMB?

The research team was comprised of four female students enrolled in an independent study at UMB. The group included three self-identified lesbians and one self-identified bisexual woman and there was diversity with respect to income and racial/ethnic/cultural background of the student/faculty team. A gay male student was involved in the project but withdrew from the university for reasons unrelated to the DRI. A female, heterosexual faculty member supervised the research team.

To address the issues of possible researcher bias, a student-faculty research team was sought which reflected diversity with respect to race, gender, culture and sexual orientation of team members. It was expected that the multiple perspectives represented would ensure that neither the study design nor the data analysis would be unduly influenced by any single point of view. To expose student and faculty preconceptions that might influence the research, weekly meetings focused early and often on the personal opinions, beliefs and attitudes held by students and faculty team members toward diversity with respect to sexuality. The information we shared helped us to design the interview guide, as well as the analysis process. This personal and group exploration process, in which faculty and students were expected to share their biases openly, helped the research group to become very cohesive, respectful and honest with one another. This process set an expectation that tolerance of diverse points of view would be expected from every member of the team. Further, this process helped to set the group norms of shared decision-making and the balance between faculty and students.

Because the data needed to address this question are not readily attainable by using traditional epidemiological study designs, a qualitative field study using in-depth, open-ended interviews with key informants in the student body would be necessary to obtain the rich detail necessary for this exploratory, descriptive research. These face-to-face interviews, based on the "long interview technique,"

were used to elicit the experiences and views of LGB students at UMB (Crabtree & Miller, 1991; McCracken, 1988). An interview guide consisting of four open-ended, non-directive questions was designed to elicit "stories" or relevant experiences that respondents had in the classroom and in the social environment at UMB. With faculty guidance, students helped to refine the questions and to pilot, test, and revise the questions. The questions were 1) "Please tell me about your experiences as a student at UMB" 2) "Can you tell me about your experiences in class or on campus with respect to your sexuality? Please tell me a story" 3) "How does the university respond, if at all, to the concerns of LGB students?" 4) "What suggestions do you have for dealing with diversity at UMB?"

A purposive sample of key informants was sought from the student body. Black and white students were represented in the student group. It should be noted that the sample of student respondents was not intended to be representative of all LGB students at UMB. Rather, given the short time to conduct the study, it was the goal to gather in-depth exploratory and descriptive data from a small sample of respondents. Students were contacted by word of mouth, by direct approach by members of the research team, by faculty direction, and by advertising at the LGB Center at UMB. Of the sixteen students who were approached, 10 agreed to be interviewed, while 3 declined. Three students changed their minds or did not show up for their scheduled interviews. A total of 10 LGB students were interviewed.

The interviews were 1 to 2 hours in length and were audiotaped, after signed informed consent was obtained. The tapes have been kept securely by the faculty team leader. Five interviews were transcribed by the students who conducted them and all identifying information was deleted. The interview transcripts range from 10-20 pages per interview. Preliminary themes and "stories of intolerance" were identified using group consensus and kept by color coding portions of the transcripts. This labor-intensive process was used to guard against bias, but turned out to be too ambitious for the one semester time limit.

Preliminary findings reveal that all 10 of the respondents reported on experiences that reflected some level of intolerance in the classroom and/or the social environment at UMB that students attributed to their sexuality. All of the respondents perceived homophobia and heterosexism to be widely prevalent within the university community. The students in our sample experienced homophobia and heterosexism at UMB which ranged from "deafening silence" or "avoidance" (sometimes expressed by hateful and anonymous graffiti in university bathrooms) to overt "threats of murder" directed toward a lesbian student in a classroom situation. Some recurrent themes are: a perceived lack of safety of LGB students on campus; lack of formal university structures for support; and absence of proactive administrative policies addressing intolerance toward LGB students.

Several policy recommendations have been drafted and are being refined. It should be noted that thorough data analysis has not been completed to date. Although the stories related by a small sample of key informants cannot be

considered representative of the views of all LGB students at UMB, they raise serious questions for further investigation with a larger representative sample of students using a survey method yielding quantitative data.

In the research process, students were involved as key decision-makers in every phase of the research. These steps involved 1) refining the research questions, 2) selecting the purposive sample of students to be interviewed, 3) drafting and refining questions for the interview guide, 4) refining the informed consent form, issues of data collection and data analyses, and 5) presentation of findings to the DRI and university communities.

At the outset, the faculty team leader decided that the process goals were as important as the product goals. One of the process goals was for students to claim ownership of their research project. The faculty team leader chose to empower students as beginning social researchers by involving them as decision-makers in all phases of research. This goal was made explicit from the beginning and reinforced throughout the semester.

The Benefits of Collaborative Research

Although some of the study findings are presented above, some observations regarding this collaborative process of research are noteworthy. First, the qualitative research process was tremendously rewarding for both faculty and students as evidenced by presentations made by the LGB group to the DRI seminar and to the university community. The level of understanding of LGB students' experiences in the classroom and the social environment at UMB far surpassed the initial expectations of the faculty and students. This may be attributed to three factors: 1) the qualitative method, 2) the group process of shared decision-making and 3) the richness of data collected using a qualitative interview method with key informants.

This level of satisfaction with the research process may be attributed to the model of shared-decision making employed throughout all phases of the research process conducted in only one semester. The faculty team leader's role was to guide the research process by enabling students to "learn while doing." The faculty team leader's goal was for students to become excited by the research process; to develop self-confidence as beginning social researchers; to conduct a study that was methodologically sound and to make a contribution to the university community by broadening the understanding of diversity with respect to sexuality. This process was tremendously rewarding for faculty and students alike. Mutual understanding and respect for differences among the participants was the result for all involved.

References

1. Crabtree, B.F., Miller, W.L. (1991). "Qualitative Approach to Primary Care Research: The Long Interview". *Family Medicine*, 23, 145-151.

2. McCracken, G.D. (1988). *The Long Interview*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Diversity Research Initiative: Students' Learning Experiences & Educational Environment at CPCS:

(Excerpts from a DRI Research Report)

by Watchen Barker, Noel Curtin, Debbie Gray, Trish Leelman, Lila Pronczuk, Robert Scott, Ginnie Soucy, and Asgedet Stefanos (Faculty Team Leader, General Center, CPCS)

The team's research goal was to examine the effects of multicultural learning on CPCS students' personal and professional cultural competence. The Diversity Research group of 7 were well selected to represent diverse groups: There were 5 women and 2 men; 3 immigrants from Africa, Poland and Ireland, 2 African-Americans, and 3 Euro-Americans, and 1 person with physical disability.

The group first examined the purpose of the study and the problems to explore in researching diversity issues. A couple of sessions were devoted to reviewing the literature that was provided by DRI staff. Then there was a discussion on the research strategy to be used and the group agreed that we would use an ethnographic approach.

Methodology and Group Process

On February 5, 1997 a CPCS DRI team consisting of seven students and one professor met as a group to discuss the proposed research project. Each member identified him/herself, provided some background information and the length of time in attendance at the College of Public and Community Services. Team members then proceeded to share their own perceptions of diversity and multiculturalism in relation to the student learning process at CPCS. The initial meeting with the other two DRI research teams was scheduled for February 10. At this meeting, the research project as a whole was described, and faculty and student members of the three DRI teams were introduced to each other.

On February 12, the CPCS team met to discuss research methods, and decided that ours would be a qualitative study. We constructed a questionnaire, with open-ended questions for individual interviews. It was the consensus of the group that our research would be focused on meeting the educational needs of CPCS students. However, we also felt it was important to include CPCS faculty and administrative staff in order to gain insight into their strategies and approaches to multicultural learning, and we decided to incorporate faculty and staff into the study as well. From the first meeting, the focus was on student perceptions of

diversity, and the impact of multicultural learning. Some of the questions raised included the following: How did the student interpret diversity and feel about it? What kind of experiences did the student have with diversity? How was the term "cultural" to be defined? What was the classroom setting like, and how could it be different? Our brainstorming lasted for a couple of weeks. The actual formulation of specific questions that would make up the questionnaire survey was completed after several team meetings.

While we were formulating our questions, team members' attendance dropped briefly from seven to four. These four team members created a list of possible questions which were brought back to the entire group for review. This process continued for three weeks because of scheduling difficulties—of getting started on time, and of having initially designated only one hour for our team meetings. Consequently, it took another two weeks to create a questionnaire that was acceptable to everyone.

The second cohort-wide, DRI team meeting took place on March 10. Each of the groups talked about their research process thus far and what needed to be accomplished to complete their own research projects. Input from the other two DRI teams was helpful, since all of the teams had a difficult time defining their research questions and coming to a consensus on how best to obtain the data. In addition, some of the technical problems in carrying out this research were similar, and it was useful to learn how others planned to resolve them. One of the major difficulties for the CPCS team was logistical—finding ways to mutually agree upon a meeting time and place where the entire team could all be together for a long period of time to accomplish their research goals. We could not, for example, find an empty room to meet in the CPCS area.

A finished questionnaire was finally achieved on March 26, 1997. The initial goal was to complete 35 questionnaires. However, because of time constraints, the actual number for this research finally turned out to be 33, with a breakdown of 20 students, 6 faculty, and 7 administrative staff. ...

Findings: Educational Environment

The survey contained questions pertinent to whether or not the CPCS faculty provided a conducive atmosphere for diversity learning, and whether or not the instructors were interested in the students' learning. More than half of the students answered yes, however, with some reservations, emphasizing that a lot depended upon the instructor. Others, more positive in their responses, reported that in their view, the CPCS faculty make an honest effort to confront some pretty controversial issues in the delivery of their courses. The faculty, on the other hand, came down divided on this issue with only one of the six respondents offering a committed "yes." Fifty percent of the faculty answered "no" and the remaining

either had mixed feelings or were not quite certain. The administrative staff's views were varied and reflected diverse opinions. ...

Impact of Courses on Diversity and Multiculturalism

When it came to the issue of whether or not a better understanding about social change through diversity and multicultural learning was achieved, the students had three different responses. Almost 80% said yes. There were two students who reported that their understanding of diversity was better before coming to the College and one had a completely negative response, stating that realization of the hatred people can have because of the color of one's skin was overwhelming. Almost all of the faculty agreed that they have learned to look upon social change with understanding, if not acceptance. The administrative staff was unanimous with their "yes" responses. ...

Of the courses and learning experiences which had an impact on the understanding of diversity, most of the students stated that Cultural Awareness, Cultural Diversity Through Literature, and Race and Culture helped them to reflect upon issues which they had never thought about before. African-American students sensed that their white counterparts were not as judgmental as those off campus. Conversely, white students felt that their increased knowledge of race issues made them understand why people of color are treated unjustly and how people of color have contributed to this country. ...

With regard to the question of competency of the faculty who teach diversity courses, the data generated quite a surprising outcome. The majority of students interviewed reported that the faculty were competent in their presentation of materials and teaching. The faculty itself, on the other hand, had just the reverse opinion of themselves, and their fellow faculty members. Staff were evenly split, 50-50. ...

Recommendations

Our general consensus was that this was an extremely important and interesting project, and we are glad to be able to offer our research contribution to the College. Since the DRI was also a new experience for all of the student researchers, the group considered it a learning process at each stage of the study. The team would have liked to have the research time extended longer than the 14 weeks for completion of the project, especially since it took six weeks alone to draft and complete the questionnaire.

Based upon our findings and observations by the student researchers, we would like to make the following recommendations:

1) Enhance the courses on diversity—beginning with Assessment, and including the other varied course offerings in the College. Many students felt that they have learned a lot about diversity but expressed a desire to deepen their

understanding. Some felt that diversity/multicultural learning had many layers and that there was much more to be learned when one applied our learning to everyday life at work and social life.

2) Improve the Cultural Awareness course in Assessment. The data revealed that Assessment generated strong opinions, both positive and negative. All of those interviewed felt that this course constitutes the most crucial entry point for their diversity learning at CPCS. However, the effectiveness of the experience depended largely upon who is teaching the course and the diversity of the students in the classroom. Those who happened to be in a diverse setting based on class, race, gender and ethnicity have a more worthwhile experience than those who may end up in a homogenous group. Also, the cultural competency of the faculty member is very important in facilitating multicultural learning. ...

Analyzing the Impact of Asian American Studies in the Curriculum: Making Meaning Over Time in the Lives of Alumni

by Peter Kiang, Faculty Team Leader
Graduate College of Education/Asian American Studies

The following serves as a brief report on our Spring 1997 Diversity Research Initiative project: *Researching the Impact of Asian American Studies.* The 1-2 page report submitted together with this report serves as a summary of findings; this report is more akin to a project evaluation. I hope both formats are useful to the multiple audiences with interests in the DRI.

Background: In Spring 1997, I provided a combination of independent study opportunities to support a doctoral student and five undergraduates from UMass Boston, together with an education graduate student from Harvard to participate in the DRI project focusing on the long-term effects of Asian American Studies in the UMass Boston curriculum for our alumni.

I developed this research focus as a way to reflect on Spring 1997 as the 10th anniversary since we first offered "Asian Minorities in America" and other Asian American Studies courses at UMass Boston every semester. As the primary faculty member responsible for Asian American Studies teaching and course development at UMass Boston, I knew that course evaluation forms and informal feedback consistently indicated that the courses provide meaningful learning experiences for most students during the semester. However, I also recognized that we did not have any systematic information about what impact our Asian American Studies courses have had over time Furthermore, in doing a literature search as well as contacting directors of the major Asian American Studies programs in the country, I discovered that no one else did either!

Beyond being an important question for those of us directly involved with developing and assessing Asian American Studies courses/programs, I viewed our research question as having significance for UMass Boston institutionally, particularly in relation to the university's Diversity Course Requirement because our 200-level Asian American Studies courses each fulfill the requirement and many students take those courses, in part, to satisfy the requirement. The Diversity Course Requirement is one articulation of what the university considers essential for all students who graduate from UMass Boston to have learned/experienced. With that in mind, I viewed our specific DRI research as an initial step to evaluate

what difference do these "diversity" courses really make after students leave UMass Boston.

The DRI Group Independent Study:

Our DRI research team included Amy Emura, Naoki Koyama, Yen Mach, Yuko Matsubara, Stacy Pires, Hyun Jung Lee, Albert Koo (from Harvard Graduate School of Education), and myself as Faculty Sponsor. Amy, Naoki, and Yuko were international students from Japan. Hyun Jung was an international student from Korea. Yen was ethnically Chinese but came to the U.S. as a refugee from Vietnam. Stacy was Cape Verdean, and Albert was an immigrant from Hong Kong. Each student was bilingual, and no one was a native English speaker/writer.

I invited the team members specifically based on my familiarity with their previous coursework in Asian American Studies and my belief that each individual would care about the research question and contribute productively to the group process. Stacy had completed a pilot study on the same question in an Asian American Studies community research course during the previous semester. The other undergraduates and the Harvard graduate student had not conducted original research before.

Our team met for two and a half hours each Monday afternoon, during which time we discussed research methods and questions, shared ideas and problems, provided feedback to each other, presented data and findings, reflected on the research and team process, and met monthly with the other two DRI project teams. Participants each kept reflective journals, maintained communication during the week through email or office visits or by phone, and developed a variety of individual and collective documents to summarize our research findings at the end of the semester.

In structuring the DRI research work through an independent study course format, our team agreed on the following goals:

- to work and learn together as a team and share experiences and connections with each other;

- to develop an updated, accurate database and to renew connections with former Asian American Studies students;

- to analyze how former students view the meaning and impact of their learning experiences in Asian American Studies courses at UMass Boston.

- to gain experience with qualitative research methods of data collection and analysis, including individual and focus-group interviewing, transcribing, and coding;

- to collaborate and share our learnings with two other group independent study sections supported by the Diversity Research Initiative during this semester;

As part of our evaluation — and distinct from summarizing/sharing our research findings — I asked the student participants to do their own evaluations and final reflections based on these independent study goals and their own experiences. In those documents, each student concluded that we were largely successful in fulfilling our goals, particularly in working as a team, gaining experience with research methods, and generating significant findings related to the impact of Asian American Studies for alumni. Their memos, along with the final papers that present our findings, are available for further review. In this document, I am presenting my own views which are very much informed by the students' perspectives.

Research Findings:

In our public presentation and our summary of preliminary findings, *Analyzing the Impact of Asian American Studies in the Curriculum: Making Meaning Over Time in the Lives of Alumni*, we offered the following sampling of findings:

· Asian American Studies courses have had overwhelmingly positive impact in enabling UMass Boston alumni to develop and apply specific sets of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that have had direct relevance and meaning across a range of domains, including their jobs/careers, education, family life, friendships and interpersonal relationships, community involvements, social awareness, and personal identities.

· While these positive impacts cut across all groups, regardless of race, gender, # of courses taken, or year of graduation, there are some meaningful differences in emphasis based on race. Asian[1] alumni, for example, specifically point to personal identity -- becoming more aware of who they are in U.S. society — along with social awareness such as learning about the immigrant experience as the areas of strongest impact. White alumni highlight areas of social awareness such as interacting more comfortably with Asian Americans, learning more about the immigrant experience, and becoming more aware of racial stereotypes. They also include their academic and intellectual interests as areas in which Asian American Studies courses have most influenced them.

· The survey responses of Black and Latino alumni are quite consistent with the responses by Asian students, but their sample sizes are not large enough to generate reliable data. This can be partially addressed by oversampling techniques in our continuing research. However, this also reflects a programmatic need to encourage greater numbers of Black and Latino students to take Asian American Studies courses.

· Based on coding and thematic analysis of the open-ended survey responses and interviews, we find a web of powerful themes emerging from the data that

includes: gaining knowledge and new perspectives, interactions and relationships, becoming open and active, gaining voice and listening to others, clarifying education and career goals, and impacting the community and society. Impacts at the level of "Self" — particularly in terms of personal development, identity, and gaining voice/power — are especially important to explore more fully.

· Although their responses to both the survey and interview questions are consistently thoughtful, many informants agree that they did not consciously recognize the impact of their learning from Asian American Studies courses until we asked our research questions: As a 1994 alumna explained, "It just makes me remember how valuable the courses were and how much of an influence it's had in changing my life, you know, changing the way I look at things... I feel like it's just a part of me now."

· While some students choose to take Asian American Studies courses for personal or academic and professional reasons, others enroll simply to fulfill the university's Diversity Course graduation requirement. From their experiences, however, alumni interviewees consistently stress the importance of the Diversity Requirement as a valuable and essential learning opportunity.

· Nine out of ten alumni (92%) rank their Asian American Studies courses as either very good or among the best when compared to all courses they took at UMass Boston. Furthermore, their experiences in these courses help most alumni (72%) feel significantly more positively about UMass Boston as an institution. In light of the university's efforts to mobilize alumni support for its ambitious capital campaign, the positive memories and associations of former students who took Asian American Studies courses must be a valuable resource to recognize and cultivate.

· Our data sharply contradict assertions within the national debate over multicultural curricular reform that ethnic studies courses/programs have divisive and exclusionary effects. Only 2% of all survey respondents, for example, noted that their experiences in Asian American Studies courses made them feel very isolated from the rest of society, compared with 87% who said this type of effect was little or not at all. Similarly, no (0%) survey respondents reported feeling much or very much discouraged or bitter about living in the U.S. as a result of their Asian American Studies coursework.

· Our collaborative process in conducting this research has been challenging, time-consuming, and stressful. Yet, our learning has been powerful and our data are clearly rich with meaning and implications. We will individually and collectively continue developing and reflecting on this work at many levels and in many forms in the future.

In their evaluations, each student was clear that one semester was too short a time to conduct the kind of research we envisioned. Although their final data analysis papers have many important insights, I am sure that we can go deeper. I

was not able to spend much time myself with the data (19 individual interview transcripts, three focus group interviews, survey responses from 60+ individuals, etc), and am anxious both to return to what we have already collected and to continue with additional interviews and questionnaires. Our data are very rich and ready for continued work.

In addition to the data and findings, however, we also learned much about collaborative learning, research training, and community-building processes — all of which are also central to the purpose and expected outcomes of the DRI .

Process Reflections:

In fact, paying attention to the team's dynamics was the single most important focus of our work. I suspect this is not simply the case for our particular team but must be an important aspect of our students' lives and our institutional reality at UMass Boston where relationship-building needs to be always central in our pedagogy. Furthermore, team dynamics and continued attention to team-building is also essential in the DRI work because of the very nature of doing real, meaningful research, as Amy Emura explains in her own reflection paper, "Analyzing the Impact of Asian American Studies in the Curriculum: Learning and Training Through the Research Proces":

> ***For researchers, it is normal to confront unpredictable elements in the process of doing research. Research strategies need to be flexible to allow for changes in the process, especially when initiating a new research project. Appropriate methods need to be developed from practice rather than following standard or traditional methods uncritically, even if they have been successful or tested by others. But for our students, the unclarity and flexibility inherent in real research directly conflicts with their assumptions about work to fulfill requirements of a course. They wanted to know specifically and well in advance what to complete in terms of assignments during the semester. Because their expectations about doing differed with Dr. Kiang's and mine, they became frustrated when we could not provide simple, clear guidelines to follow, especially in analyzing the data. This added to their stress levels and further lowered their motivation. As our work became more difficult (when we began coding data, for example), students began to negotiate the extensions for their research in order to complete assignments for other classes which seemed "clearer".*** **(1997, p. 12)**

Naoki, for example, explains in his evaluation memo one way in which the team provided collective support to complete the research:

> ***For me, this experience is first research class, so I had some confusion or hesitation. Every time I met my team mates in the school, I said first, "How is your research?" They also asked me, "How about yours?"... I was really encouraged from my team mates because everybody were struggling and trying hard.***

Nevertheless, our multiple intentions to build an affirming learning community with students while training them in research methods and also conducting meaningful research during the same semester are at best difficult to achieve, and may be fundamentally contradictory. I am sure that these tensions between team-building, methods training, and data collection/analysis will challenge every other DRI team as well. Although we handled these tensions as honestly and constructively as possible, Stacy's final memo reveals some of the pain involved in our work where we held such high expectations across our five goals:

> ***Something that I will never forget about this research process is the feeling of letting Peter and the group down. I never thought that I would feel that way until I realized I was falling behind. I did not know what was going on at times and sometimes felt frustrated with the entire project. I found myself panicking and feeling like everything was falling apart. I would call up some people from the team and get off the phone literally in tears because I had no idea what they were talking about. I hate the fact that I was pressing for time and that I could do nothing about it. That was something I will never want to experience again unless I really have to. It was an experience that helped me grow.***

Despite the pain, however, our process was both purposeful and powerful. In the end, particularly after our final presentation, each team member's reflections clearly touched each of the goals we had articulated for our work. Hyun Jung, for example, recalls the impact of the group's shared learning from each other:

> ***The other moment [I remember most] was our last meeting especially after we came back from the [the final presentation] meeting with two other groups and stayed almost until 6 o'clock (instead of 4:30 pm) to share our final insights and what we have gained from this research. Yes, the findings of a research project are very important and also the gaining of knowledge and research method skill. However, to me, reflections and insights from each group member are much more valuable and meaningful because it is alive information and can't get from anywhere, even textbooks.***

Albert reveals some of his own growth as a researcher:

> ***Personally, I am still learning how to do the analysis. I am confused about how to interpret and analyze the quotes from the interviews. I feel like my analysis is not in-depth enough... When reading the transcript, I need to read carefully and think about what the person was trying to tell me.***

Yen also shares her own learning as a researcher and her appreciation for the legacy of her/our work:

> ***I remember at different times during this research project, I have wondered about "Why are we taking so many little steps in this gathering of data? It's such a waste of time!" I thought we could just do the interview and pick out lines or quotes that are important to answering the questions we were asking. But now that we are at the end of the semester, I realize that all those steps were important because we are not the only people working with the data, and that people from other semesters might be looking at these also [as the research continues]. I feel now that I was somewhat selfish before; I didn't think about who else might benefit from the hard work we have done to find out all this information. Now that I realize this, I feel that all the different steps we took to get to this point have not been wasted, and it was very important to everyone.***

Stacy argues further that our learning is not only meaningful for those involved in the process, but can have impact on the institutional level nationally:

> ***Maybe other universities will following in our foot steps and pay close attention to our research. [Students] Filling out the [course] evaluation at the end of the semester is not that accurate and you can really understand what needs to be done to improve any course. These findings are a way for professors, deans, department heads, students and President to know what needs to be done and how to do it.***

Finally, Yuko, whom everyone agreed was the student who worked the hardest and accomplished the most in terms of the research itself, concludes her final memo with a point not at all related to the research, but which, interestingly, I recall being the essential motivation in our developing the original DRI proposal for the Ford Foundation. She simply observes: I feel that I have found a niche for myself in school.

Doing Something After:

In her interview about the long-term impact of Asian American Studies for our research project, a Chinese American alumna, Jessica (a pseudonym) reflected:

> ***I just wanted to say that these courses triggered me to think about my life in a different way than I had before and that led to my making different decisions and different choices. I think that where I am now, what I do, I think largely, a lot of it was the seeds planted when I started taking these courses. If it is not a direct result, it would at least be an indirect result and things that I learned from those courses, facts, or just general knowledge, I still remember now. I think the way that you can tell if a program is good is that if the people who leave the program.... if they really.... if they do something with it after.***

The impact of the DRI in general, and our project, in particular, can take a similar perspective. What will we do with it after? For ourselves, our interests in Jessica's voice/life and our larger research question about Asian American Studies continue. At the same time, we can also now reflect on our shared DRI experience and its long-term impact both for us individually and for our university institutionally.

Concretely, I have already used our research findings about the impact of Asian American Studies to ground a proposal to establish a formal Asian American Studies program at UMass Boston. I have shared our findings with program committees at UMass Amherst and Lowell who have similar charges, and I will be sharing some of the findings at a plenary session of the East Coast regional Asian American Studies conference at NYU in November. I am aware of AAHE's and AAC&U's interests in evaluating the impact of diversity initiatives in the curriculum, and hope to reach those audiences as well. Finally, our DRI project work will serve as the basis for a grant proposal to NASPA's Ford Diversity Project in November, so that our research project can continue with full support. Our work has exemplified the DRI's overall purpose, and demonstrated the power of collaborative, diversity-related, institutional research in terms of both the findings we have generated and the process we have modeled.

Notes

1 "Asian" in this paper refers to alumni of Asian origin who may have been immigrants, refugees, U.S.-born, or international students with visa status.

Section IV

Diversity Research Initiative

Sample Materials Developed by the Research Teams

Team Project Materials

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON
COLLEGE OF NURSING

Independent Study: Diversity Initiative Research

Spring 1998 Credit:3 Dates: Wednesday (1-2 hour group meeting)
Faculty co-sponsors: Drs. Lin Zhan & William Fite
Virtual Office: Zhan@umbsky.cc.umb.edu
Wfite@mediaone.net

Student Participants: Jeanette Livello (team Leader) - RNJiNc20w@aol.com
Jian Rong Liu - Zhojian@worldnet.att.net
Candice Taggart - (TBA)
Victoria Straklause - Scout10@earthlick.net

Course Description:
This course provides opportunity for students to work collaboratively as a team to investigate the learning needs of English as Second Language Students (ESL) at the College of Nursing. Using University as a site of inquiry, students will build research skills and knowledge of diversity through conducting research and participating in a faculty and student research community. Faculty with research experiences will guide students in research design including sampling, procedures, formulation of research questions, data collection, and data analysis. Students will disseminate research findings. In this collaborative research process, students will develop critical insights into understanding the concept of diversity and examining of a variety of diversity issues. Students are required to take on the role of team players, participant-observers, interviewers, and data analysts. Findings of the research provide empirical knowledge to the understanding of diversity issues in higher education.

Course Objectives:
Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Formulate appropriate research questions.
2. Design research methodology.
3. Gain experience in data collection and analysis.
4. Evaluate research design, process, and individual experience.
5. Identify ethical issues involved in the research process.
6. Identify the learning needs of ESL students in the College of Nursing through empirical study.
7. Build collaborative skills with other research teams on the campus.
8. Gain insights into the issues of diversity
9. Disseminate research findings to Diversity Initiative seminars
10. Make recommendations for how to meet the learning needs of ESL students based on the empirical research findings.

Requirements:
- Participate actively in weekly team meetings and monthly seminar sessions with other project teams.

Document research process including meeting minutes, seminar discussion, formulation of research questions, methods of inquiry, questions, experience on a weekly basis and throughout the semester.

- Review related literature
- Report at the mid-term on progress of the group research and your role in this research project.

Share own learning experience of being a researcher

- Write a research final paper and give group presentation that synthesize research process and outcomes.

Schedule:

The group meet on every Wednesday. Below are general topics for weekly discussion:

- Introduction of the DRI Research Project
- Community building among participants
- Design Research Methods and outline procedures
- Understandings of diversity
- Data Collection & analysis
- Ethical issues in research
- Data Collection and individual progress report
- The relationship between diversity and collaborative learning
- Data transcription or analysis
- Emerging research themes
- Data analysis
- Writing research report
- Research presentation strategies
- Diversity and institution impact.

Required Readings:

Munhall, P., & Boyd, C. (1993). Nursing Research: A Qualitative Perspective. New York: National League for Nursing, Pub. No. 19-2535.

Polit, D., & Hungler, B. (1996). Nursing Research: Principles and Methods. New York: J.B. Lippincott Company.

May, K. A. (1989). Interview techniques in qualitative research: Concerns and challenges. In J. Morse (Ed.) Qualitative Nursing Research: A Contemporary Dialogue (pp. 171-182). Rockville, Maryland: Aspen Publishers. Inc.

Fontana, A., Fret, J. (1994). Interviewing: The art of science. In Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.). Handbook of Qualitative Research (pp. 361-376). Sage Publications, Inc.

Brink, P. (1989). Issues in reliability and validity. In J. Morse (Ed.) Qualitative Nursing Research: A Contemporary Dialogue (pp. 151-167). Rockville, Maryland: Aspen Publishers. Inc.

N/B: Other readings will be distributed periodically.

A SURVEY FOR THE RESEARCH PROJECT

LEARNING NEEDS OF ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENTS
IN THE COLLEGE OF NURSING

CODE#_____

(Your time and answers to the following questions are greatly appreciated!)

01. How long have you been in the United States?

02. What is your home language?

03. What has influenced your choice of nursing?

04. Did you take any English courses in UMass Boston? If yes, do you think these courses prepare you in your nursing courses?

05. How many courses did you take last semester? On which level?

100
200
300
400

06. Which nursing course(s) was/were most difficult to you?

07. In your view of learning nursing science, what is the most challenging aspect to you (example, understanding textbooks; memorizing medical terms; adjusting teaching styles; writing in English, etc.)

08. Does being an Asian student have any impact on your learning in the College of Nursing? If yes, please elaborate.

09. In your learning process, have you ever got any help when you needed?

Yes No

If yes, What kind of help? From where?

10. What kind of help did you need most in your learning?

11. Were you aware of the tutoring service offered by the College of Nursing?

Yes
No

If yes, have you ever used it? Yes No

If yes, Did you find it helpful? Yes No

If no, why not?_____

12. Do you think you need additional help or support in your learning?

Yes No

If yes, what kind of help would you like to have?_____
_____

13. How do you feel about your learning experience in clinical settings?

Easy _____
OK _____
Difficult _____
Very difficult _____

14. Which part of your clinical learning experience do you feel the most difficult?

15. Are you satisfied with what you have been achieving in your learning in the College of Nursing?

Yes No

If no, why? _____

16. Do you feel confident that you will succeed in your learning?

Yes No

If not, why not? _____

17. Do you feel free to ask questions in your classes and clinical practice?

Yes No

If not, why? _____

18. Do you feel free to talk to your instructor or professor about the problems and needs in your learning?

Yes No

If no, why? _____

19. Did any of your instructors stop to spell the terms when she/he introduced new terms the first time?

Yes No

20. Did your English-speaking classmate like to pair with you in clinic or class when you needed?

Yes No

21. What kind of teaching methods or style helped you LEAST?

22. What kind of teaching methods or style helped you MOST?

23. Were your instructors aware of the difference between non-English-speaking and English-speaking students in your class or clinical setting?

Yes No

24. Were your instructors aware of the difference between students WITH and WITHOUT clinical experience when he or she talked about clinical subjects?

Yes No

25. Do you think that your culture background is valued in your class and clinic?

Yes No

26. Were you ever asked by your instructor to share the uniqueness of your culture in health and health practices with the class?

Never _____
Occasionally _____
Sometimes _____
Always _____

27. What suggestions do you have in order to improve your learning and learning environment in the College of Nursing?

28. If you have any additional ideas, thoughts, and suggestions, please write them down to the space provided. If you need additional space, please feel free to attach a piece of paper.

Thank you for your time and feedback!

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

LEARNING NEEDS OF ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENTS
IN THE COLLEGE OF NURSING

1. **Introduction** (role of the researchers, purposes of this study, confidentiality, procedure of interviewing, follow-up, and questions).

2. **Tell us about yourself? (Go around the entire group).**

   2-1: How long have you been in the United States?

   2-2: Did you go to high school in the US?

   2-3: What is your culture?

3. **Tell us about your learning experience in the College of Nursing.**

   Probing:

   3-1: In what aspects have you felt positive (good) about your learning experience in the College of Nursing?

   3-2: In what aspects have you found difficult in your learning?

   3-3: Have you ever experienced any language difficulty in your learning?

   3-4: (If a language problem rises) In what ways does your language problem block your study?

   3-5: How would you like such learning needs to be met?

   3-6: How have you dealt with your difficulties in learning?

   3-7: Have you got any help? If yes, from where? Whom? Is the help useful for your learning?

4. In your view, have your professors addressed cultural differences and diversity issues in the classroom or/and clinic?

4-1: If yes, in what ways? Have you found such approach helpful in your learning?

4-2: If no, how would you like your professor to address these issues?

4-3: In what ways does your culture help your learning?

4-4: In what ways do you feel that your culture impedes your learning?

5. In your view, what ways have your professors accommodated your learning needs?

5-1: for the best of your knowledge, what resources/service have the College of Nursing provided to help your learning in the past?

5-2: What services/resources may help you in the future?

5-3: What help would be most relevant to you? (Ideas and suggestions).

6. Any other learning needs do you have?

7. Any suggestions can you think about that help your learning in the College of Nursing?

MAC 478 SPECIAL TOPICS IN MARKETING

The Diversity Research Initiative:
An Application of Advanced Research Methods
to Study Students' University Image and University Choice

Spring 1997
Dr. Raymond R. Liu
liu@umbsky.cc.umb.edu
Phone: 287-7739
Class Meeting Time: M 2:00-4:30 pm.
Office Hours: M&W 4:20 - 5:50 pm and by appointment

Purpose and Goals

The project we are going to work on is called "student-faculty involved research project". Three groups (including us) from different colleges of UMass Boston are involved this project. This project is funded by the Ford Foundation, and implemented through UMass Boston's Center for the Improvement of Teaching (CIT). By the end of the Spring semester, we will be able to produce a paper which will be submitted to a journal for publication. The purpose for this project is not only fulfill the university's Concentration and Diversity Requirements, but also get the students ahead and have their name in the field, which will provide not only those students advanced skills, but also future opportunities for their career. During the semester, we will work and learn together as a team and share experiences and connections with each other. In addition, we will collaborate and share our research learning with two other groups from other colleges at UMass Boston.

Topic:Students' University Image and University Choice

Image has been considered as a very important strategic tool in the highly competitive business world of the 1990s when developing marketing strategy. A unique image can be one of the most valuable assets and be difficult to duplicate by others (Rosenbloom 1983; Steenkamp and Wedel 1991). For example, it has been shown that store image plays a key role in customer patronage and store success (Stanley and Sewell 1976; Korgaonkar, Lund, and Price 1985), Store Positioning (Berry 1969), advertising strategies (Hathcote 1995), store choice (Schiffman, Dash, and Dillon 1977; Nevin and Houston 1980; Malhotra 1983), and store loyalty (Lessig 1973).

However, Despite the critical role of image, the attempt to study the impact of students' university image on university choice, especially for the diversity student groups, has not been made. It might be fruitful for the diversity higher education and UMass Boston marketing strategy and policy to examine this important issue.

What do we mean by university image? It can be conceptualized as an overall impression of a university as perceived by a student . A university image is less like a photograph and more

like an interpretive portrait. In other words, based on their own way of thinking, believing, selecting (of exposure, comprehension, and retention), and interpreting, different students may not have the same impression of a university. Therefore, we believe different students may have different impressions of a university and different criteria for choosing a university as well.

Objectives:

1. Discover the major components of students' university image
   (a). major components for all students
   (b). major components for student groups with diversity: - ethnic, gender, age, values, culture, geographic residency, income, in-group vs. out-group (e.g., UMass v.s. Non-UMass students), current students vs. alumni, etc.

2. Discover the major criteria of students' university choice for:
   (a). major criteria for all students
   (b). major criteria for student groups with diversity:
   - (the same diversity groups as in 1(b)).

3. Test the relationships between students' university image and university choice
   (a). relationships for all students
   (b). relationships for student groups with diversity:
   - (the same diversity groups as in 1(b)).

4. Confirm diversity as a competitive advantage for UMass Boston

5. Recommend marketing strategies to reach diversity student groups

Approaches:

1. Exploratory research including:
   (a). literature search from both library and on-line (e.g., WWW);
   (b). one-on-one interviews with UMass administrators, UMass students, UMass alumni, and Non-UMass students;
   (c).focus groups with UMass students;

The purpose of using exploratory research is to identify, clarify, and pretest the measures of major components of University Image and major criteria of University Choice.

2. Survey research including:
   (a).Multidimensional scaling techniques will be used to identify the major components of university image based on sampling data;
   (b).Multivariate statistical techniques will be used to identify the differences among the diversity groups for their University Choice and to test the relationships between University Image and University Choice for different diversity groups;

The survey research is the central part of this study. A special point in this part will be focused on what role diversity plays in students' university image and university choice.

3. Sampling plan:

(a). a random sample from current UMass students registration list;
(b). a random sample from UMass alumni directory;
(c). a random sample from Non-UMass students (i.e., those who applied UMass but did not come for whatever reasons).

Requirements:

1. Participation:
This class requires active, articulate, innovative, and insightful participation from every member of the research team.

2. Exploratory Research:
Every one must keep a research diary to record what are found from the literature, personal interviews, and focus (or mini-Summary) groups. A summary of your diary is required.

3. Questionnaire:
Besides the questionnaire generated from the group, every member must construct and hand in his/her own questionnaire before the group one is discussed.

4. Mid-term Report:
In your Mid-term report, you (i.e., every member) need to summarize your literature and exploratory research, propose your research hypotheses, specify your research methods (including your own questionnaire which you use for testing your hypotheses), and outline your whole research process.

5. Term Paper:
Term paper is only expected at the group level.

Grading:

1. Class participation	20%
2. Summary	15%
3. Questionnaire	15%
4. Mid-term Report	20%
5. Term Paper	30%

Students' University Image and University Choice Survey Questionnaire

1. What is your impression of the following universities/colleges (for each university/college, please circle one number which represents your opinion, where 7=very favorable and 1=not favorable)?

	very favorable						not favorable
UMass Boston	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Northeastern University	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Dartmouth	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Harvard University	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Lowell	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Boston College	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Framingham State College	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Boston University	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

2. How important were the following sources in forming your impression of a college/university:

	very important						not important
Word-of mouth from friends and relatives	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Article or Ad from newspaper or magazine	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Information from College Guides	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Your own experience	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

3. Please think about the similarity of the school-pairs below, and then rate each of the school-pair according to your impression.

	very similar								not similar
UMass Boston - Northeastern University	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Boston - UMass Dartmouth	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Boston - Harvard University	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Boston - UMass Lowell	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Boston - Boston College	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Boston - Framingham State Coll	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Boston - Boston University	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Northeastern University - UMass Dartmouth	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Northeastern University - Harvard University	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Northeastern University - UMass Lowell	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Northeastern University - Boston College	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Northeastern University - Framing State Coll	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Northeastern University - Boston University	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Dartmouth - Harvard University	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Dartmouth - UMass Lowell	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Dartmouth - Boston College	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Dartmouth - Framingham State Coll	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Dartmouth - Boston University	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Harvard University - UMass Lowell	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Harvard University - Boston College	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Harvard University - Framingham State Coll	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Harvard University - Boston University	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Lowell - Boston College	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
UMass Lowell - Framingham State Coll	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

(survey continued)

UMass Lowell - Boston University	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Boston College - Framingham State Coll	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Boston College - Boston University	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Framingham State Coll - Boston University	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

4. Please indicate how important the following factors were as the criteria when you rated the school-pairs about their similarity in Question 3 (7=very important, and 1=not important).

	very important						not important
Public school vs. private school	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Teaching emphasized vs. research emphasized	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Expensive school vs. inexpensive school	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Reputation	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Other (please specify:_____)	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

5. According to your personal situation, how important were the following factors in your decision to select the school you are attending (7=very important, and 1= not important)?

	very important						not important
The school has the programs I want	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Convenient location	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Accessible location	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Admission or department staff are very helpful	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Faculty who care about students and teaching	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Student advising services	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Diversity (i.e., gender, age, race, etc.) of faculty	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Diversity (i.e., gender, age, race, etc.) of Students	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Financial aid availability	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
The tuition is inexpensive	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Job placement	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
People like yourself go there	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Student activities (i.e., clubs, social events)	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Dormitories	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Excellent reputation	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

6. According to your current situation, please indicate your opinion for the following statements:

	strongly agree						neither strongly disagree
My choice to select my school was a wise one	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
I am satisfied with my school selection	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
I like my school	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
I like the faculty in my school	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
I like the staff in my school	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
I like my schoolmates	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
I am considering transfering to another school	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
I'd tell my friends how good my school is	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
My school is one of the best	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

(survey continued)

7. Your gender: ___ male; ___ female.
8. Your age: ___ under 18; ___18-20; ___21-24; ___25-34; ___35-44; ___45-54; ___over 54.
9. Are you married? ___ yes; ___ no.
10. Are you a transfer student? ___ yes; ___ no.
11. You are a : ___ freshman; ___ sophomore; ___ junior; ___ senior; ___ graduate student.
12. Your household income: ___<$20K; ___ $20-39K; ___$40-59K; ___ $60-80K; ___ >$80K.
13. Your ethnic background: ___ African American; ___ Asian American; ___ Hispanic; ___ White; ___ Other.
14. Do you have any disability (learning or physical): ___ yes; ___ no.
15. Are you currently employed? ___ no; ___ part time; ___ full time.
16. Are you an international student? ___ yes; ___no
    (please specify the country you come from: _____).

Thank you for your participation in our study!

Table 1

Pearson Correlation between University Image and Information Sources, University Choice Criteria, and Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction with the University

Factors/Items	Pearson Correlation	Significance (2-tailed)	Number of Cases
Sources in forming university image			
Word-of mouth from friends and relatives	.215	.000	405
Article or Ad from newspaper or magazine	.102	.041	405
Information from College Guides	.230	.000	402
Your own experience	.150	.003	403
University choice criteria			
The school has the program I want	.132	.009	391
Convenient location	.153	.002	391
Accessible location	.236	.000	390
Admission or department staff are very helpful	.229	.000	388
Faculty who care about students and teaching	.275	.000	391
Student advising services	.181	.000	388
Diversity (i.e., gender, age, race, etc.) of faculty	.242	.000	389
Diversity (i.e., gender, age, race, etc.) of students	.262	.000	387
Financial aid availability	.117	.021	388
The tuition is inexpensive	.087	.086	394
Job placement	.142	.005	387
People like yourself go there	.233	.000	394
Student activities (i.e., clubs, social events)	.142	.005	386
Dormitories	-.023	.658	383
Excellent reputation	.267	.000	387
Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction with the university			
My choice to select my school was a wise one	.600	.000	373
I am satisfied with my school selection	.611	.000	376
I like my school	.616	.000	373
I like the faculty in my school	.441	.000	374
I like the staff in my school	.462	.000	376
I like my schoolmates	.461	.000	373
I am considering transferring to another school	-.285	.000	368
I'd tell my friends how good my school is	.571	.000	375
My school is one of the best	.619	.000	375

Diversity Research Initiative
CPCS DRI Team

Purposes to be achieved through the Cultural Awareness Competency

Interview Schedule

Introduction: What Center are you a part of? How long have you been on the faculty? How many times have you taught Assessment?

Questions

1. From your perspective, what is the purpose of the Cultural Awareness Competency?
   Possible Probe: How would you define culture?

2. Is it your sense that there is a commonly held purpose for it among the faculty who teach it?
   Possible probe: Do you think there should be? If not, is that a problem? What is it?

3. Tell me about your experience with teaching tot Cultural Awareness Competency. How do you approach it?
   Possible probe: Ask for ideas and concepts used for clarity of definition. Ask for specific stories, problematic situations and best cases.

4. How do you name your own culture and how does it affect your approach to the competency?

5. Has your vision of the competency changed over time? In what ways?

6. Have you changed as a result of teaching this competency? (if yes, how?)

7. Thinking in terms of variables such as --
   Makeup/chemistry of the students in the class? Your teaching style? Materials used? Size of your class? What factors have affected your experience in meeting the goals of the competency?

8. Given the purpose you hold for the demonstration of this competency, do you feel you have generally been able to achieve them?

9. What changes have you seen in students who complete this competency?

10. What changes would you like to see in the way this competency is conceived and addressed in the curriculum?

The College of Public and Community Service

Mission Statement

(Approved by the Certificate Council 2/26/98)

The College of Public and Community Service (CPCS) is one of the five collegs that comprise the University of Massachusetts Boston campus. As such, CPCS seeks to extend the tradition of the land grant university in a number of ways: by educating students to foster the public good and aid the transformation to a more equitable society; by providing research, advocacy, technical assistance, and service to the surrounding community; and by forging partnerships with public agencies and community organizations that enhance the quality of life for low income and other inadequately served populations. In these ways, the college works toward overcoming the attitudes, beliefs, and structures in our society which prevent access to the resources that exist and discourage full participation in economic, civic, cultural, and political life. As an alternative educational institution, CPCS endeavors to function as an inclusive, democratic, and participatory learning community which promotes diversity, equality, and social justice.

CPCS actively cultivates a diverse and mature student body and offers an empowering and effective education which equips students to advocate for themselves and to improve the health and well-being of their chosen communities. The college recognizes that, particularly in a multicultural society, such an educational enterprise is inextricably bound to the complementary goals of meaningful access and adequate support for underserved populations. The successful CPCS graduate is a competent, confident, self-directed, life-long learner who can demonstrate: the language and technical skills necessary for purposeful inquiry and communications; the professional competence to function effectively in a broad range of workplace and community-based roles and activities; the critical consciousness needed to clarify and challenge prevailing values, ideologies, and practices; and the essential knowledge required for participating fully in society.

The CPCS curriculum is designed with such students in mind. The core of this inventive educational system is a self-paced, competency-based, outcome-oriented curriculum in which prior learning is validated and collaborative projects are encouraged. At CPCS, the student is considered a resource in the educational process, and the acquisition of knowledge and skills intersects with experiential learning and field-based education. As a forward-looking educational institution, CPCS continues to explore innovative delivery systems and technologies and seeks to articulates its educational philosophy and pedagogy with other academic institutions, community organizations, and public agencies.

AmSt 479 Independent Study **Spring 1997**
Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Peter Kiang **Mondays 2:00-4:30 pm**

Diversity Research Initiative — Researching the Impact of Asian American Studies

Spring 1997 marks the 10th year since we have offered "Asian Minorities in America" and other Asian American Studies courses at UMass Boston every semester. While course evaluation forms and informal feedback indicate that the courses provide meaningful learning experiences for most students, we don't have any systematic information about what impact our Asian American Studies courses have over time. This is an important question, not only for those of us directly involved with Asian American Studies, but also for the university as a whole. Our 200-level courses, for example, each fulfill the university's Diversity Requirement. By researching the impact of our Asian American Studies courses, we can begin to evaluate what difference do these "diversity" courses really make after students leave UMass Boston. Our research will contribute to and be coordinated with two other student-faculty teams conducting research on questions related to diversity at UMass Boston. This is part of a larger three-semester project, the Diversity Research Initiative, funded by the Ford Foundation, and implemented through UMass Boston's Center for the Improvement of Teaching (CIT).

Group independent study goals:

- to work and learn together as a team and share experiences and connections with each other;
- to develop an updated, accurate database and to renew connections with former Asian American Studies students;
- to analyze how former students view the meaning and impact of their earning experiences in Asian American Studies courses at UMass Boston.
- to gain experience with qualitative research methods of data collection and analysis, including individual and focus-group interviewing, transcribing, and coding;
- to collaborate and share our learnings with two other group independent study sections supported by the Diversity Research Initiative during this semester;

Requirements:

- Active participation (sharing, giving feedback to others, making presentations) in weekly team meetings and monthly seminar sessions with the other project teams;
- Keeping a weekly journal to document insights, questions, learnings, frustrations, etc., throughout the semester;
- A mid-term memo/progress report on your own research;
- A final paper and presentation that synthesize your research and share your own learning and reflections;
- Additional or alternative options can be proposed throughout the semester.
- A small selection of readings will also be discussed in meetings and journals.

DRI Project Journal Guidelines and Focus Questions

The purpose of keeping a journal while working on this research project is to record impressions, questions, insights, and concerns as they arise during the project so that you don't lose them and so that you can share them with the group, if you wish. Your journal should help you to make sense of what you are doing/learning in this research. Some parts of your journal may be very personal and private. Other parts may serve as rough drafts of your analysis where you can test ideas and get feedback. In *qualitative* research (which we are emphasizing in this project) the researcher's written journals/ reflections represent an essential source of data that is just as important as the interview transcripts and surveys.

It is really important to be disciplined and faithful in using your journals every week. We suggest that you develop a regular habit of writing in your journals on Sunday (before Monday's class) and also on Monday night or Tuesday (after Monday's class), in addition to any spontaneous writing you might want or need to do during the week.

Throughout the semester, in addition to writing/reflecting on whatever is on your mind, please think about these general questions as possible topics to write about:

How do you feel about the way we are working together as a group? How can we improve?

What seems important to learn from the data (interviews, surveys, etc)? What impresses or surprises you? What are some questions or problems that you want/need to address?

What connections are you finding between the research and your own experience?

·How are your ideas and perspectives about the research changing? How do you think you are changing?

What are your next steps for the coming week?

In addition, here are two specific "memos" that we want you to write and share with everyone in the team (we'll ask you to do a couple more later on, too...):

Identifying and Addressing Your Assumptions (1-2 pages due Feb 19th)

In doing any kind of research, researchers must be very clear about their assumptions regarding the setting, the informants, the research questions, the audience, etc. Each of us already has some ideas about what we will find (or what we want to find...). Let's be as explicit and clear as possible before we go much further.

1. What specifically do you expect people to answer when you ask them our questions? How is this expectation similar to and different from the ways you would answer the questions yourself?

2. What feelings do you have toward the people you will interview or survey? What feelings do you have toward the interview process?

3. How can you deal with any potential problems of researcher bias (not being open to views or ideas different from your own) that are caused by your expectations and assumptions?

Interview #1 Reflections 1-2 pages due by Feb 27th.

What do you think were the three most important points that came up in your interview?

How was the interview experience similar to and different from what you expected?

What do you wish you had done differently in the interview and what, if any, changes will you make in doing interview #2? Explain how and why.

DRI Project Final Reflection/Evaluation Memo

This concluding memo asks you to evaluate our/your work in relation to the goals we outlined at the beginning of the semester and to reflect on your own learning/growth. We hope to share your memo with the DRI faculty and others interested in our work (Part I for sure, Part II with your consent). Let me know if that is not agreeable to you.

Part I. Evaluation

Please evaluate how successful we were as a group and how you were as an individual in fulfilling each of the goals of our independent study. Describe specific examples to clarify your points, particularly in terms of what worked well and what was problematic. Also, include any suggestions about what we could/should have done differently to be more effective and what should be done if the project continues. Be honest and thorough. Our goals were:

- to work and learn together as a team and share experiences and connections with each other;
- to develop an updated, accurate database and to renew connections with former Asian American Studies students;
- to analyze how former students view the meaning and impact of their learning experiences in Asian American Studies courses at UMass Boston.
- to gain experience with qualitative research methods of data collection and analysis, including individual and focus-group interviewing, transcribing, and coding;
- to collaborate and share our learnings with two other group independent study sections supported by the Diversity Research Initiative during this semester.

Part II. Reflection

While the findings of a research project are very important (assuming that the data are valid and reliable), reflection on the research process is also essential. *Reflexivity* — the back-and-forth relationship of how the researcher affects the research and how the research affects the researcher — is a core aspect of what qualitative research explicitly examines. *Who are you? What are your biases and assumptions? What are your learnings? How did you change and grow in the process of doing your research?* Please consider these questions, and write in a more personal way about your experience in this project:

- Describe a specific moment or experience during the research process that you think is really important to remember for yourself.
- What are important insights you have gained about:

  a) the impact of Asian American Studies;
  b) the process of doing research;
  c) the process of learning and teaching (this was a course, after all);
  d) your own interests, values, strengths and weaknesses, future plans, etc.

- Please include anything else you think is important to share about your experience with the project this semester, including whether you would like to continue.
- You are welcome to use a different format (a letter or poem, etc) if that is better for you.

Asian American Studies Alumni Research Project

This survey is anonymous. Please respond as thoughtfully as you can. Thank you so much!

Please assess the following statements by circling a number between 1 to 5 for each:

My learning in Asian American Studies course(s) at UMass Boston helped me to ...

	not at all		some		very much
1. graduate from college	1	2	3	4	5
2. pursue education/career options I had not considered before	1	2	3	4	5
3. work more effectively in my job	1	2	3	4	5
4. feel isolated from the rest of U.S. society	1	2	3	4	5
5. become more aware of who I am in U.S. society	1	2	3	4	5
6. interact more comfortably with Asian Americans	1	2	3	4	5
7. feel more confident about speaking up in public	1	2	3	4	5
8. develop connections to Asian American communities	1	2	3	4	5
9. develop my writing and thinking skills	1	2	3	4	5
10. deal more effectively with conflicts in my family	1	2	3	4	5
11. make friends with people different from me	1	2	3	4	5
12. feel discouraged or bitter about living in the U.S.	1	2	3	4	5
13. understand the immigrant experience more clearly	1	2	3	4	5
14. become more aware of racial stereotypes	1	2	3	4	5
15. think more positively about UMass Boston	1	2	3	4	5

Continued on other side —>

16. How do you rank your Asian American Studies courses compared with all the courses you took at UMass Boston?

among the worst	not very good	average	very good	among the best
1	2	3	4	5

17. Please compare which of the following areas of your life have been most affected by your learning experiences in Asian American Studies course(s) at UMass Boston, and rank them in numerical order (from 1 to 7) with 1 being the area least affected, then 2,3,4,5,6, and 7 being the area most affected.

___ personal identity
___ family relations
___ job/career skills/interests
___ social awareness/attitudes
___ academic/intellectual interests
___ community/social involvement
___ friendships/relationships

18. If you can, please describe a specific example of something you learned or experienced in an Asian American Studies course that you found useful or meaningful in your life after you graduated from UMass Boston.

19. Please share any other experiences or perspectives that will help us understand how you view the impact or significance of Asian American Studies courses in your life now. Please use the rest of the page if you need more space. ***Thank you for your help!***

Please send by October 30th to: Dr. Peter Kiang, Graduate College of Education, UMass Boston, 100 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, MA 02125-3393 or FAX (both sides) to Peter Kiang at 617-287-7664. Please call Peter at 617-287-7614 or send email to <peter.kiang@ umb.edu> if you have questions.

Asian American Studies Alumni Research Project
Interview Questions

Background Information

- How long ago did you graduate from UMB?

- What have you been doing after graduating from UMB?
  (job, graduate school, raising family, volunteer, activities, etc.)

Information about Asian American Studies(AAS) courses

- How many Asian American Studies courses did you take at UMB?

- How did you find out about AAS courses at UMB?
  (friends, advisor, faculty, yourself, etc.)

- What was/were reason(s) for taking AAS courses?

- Did you make friends in the AAS class?
  Do you still keep in touch?

- Tell me one of your favorite memories from AAS course(s)?

- Tell me something important or meaningful that you learned in the AAS course(s).
  (What makes it important to you?)

- In what ways did the AAS course(s) impact your life while you were student?

- Did your image, feelings, or ideas about _____ change as a result of taking the course(s)?
  yourself
  U.S. society/American history
  Asian American people/communities
  your classmates
  your family
  what you want to do with your life
  If so, how? (Be concrete.)

- What, if any, impact(s) do these AAS courses have in your everyday life now?

  a) Did your learning from AAS course(s) have any effect on your decisions about what you are doing now with your job, career, education, your family?

b) Do you use or apply any knowledge you learned from AAS course(s) in your present study or job?
If so, could you give me some examples?

c) Do you find yourself thinking or caring more about issues in AA communities after taking AAS course(s) at UMB?
If so, give some examples.

d) Has your experience from the course(s) helped you to interact with Asian Americans, or more generally with people of different races and cultures at your workplace, neighborhood, or school now?

e) Did your learning experience in AAS course(s) make you feel or act differently in the ways that you listen to others or speak up yourself?
If so, please explain how.

- If you had not taken AAS courses at UMB, would your life be any different now?
  If so, how?

- Do you ever want to take more AAS courses? Or if you could start your undergraduate study all over again, would you take the AAS course(s) again? If so, why?

- Have you ever taken other courses about different ethnic groups? If so, how were those courses similar to, or different from the AAS course(s) you took?

- How do you feel about AAS courses being used to satisfy UMB's Diversity requirement?

Next steps

- Do you have any suggestions to help strengthen AAS at UMB?

- Do you have any suggestions to help us with this research project?

- Is there anything else you would like to say about what meaning or impact AAS course(s) have had for you and your life today?

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